

# Faith-Based Political Engagement at the Sub-state Level in the UK

The Cases of Wales and Northern Ireland

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of P.h.D

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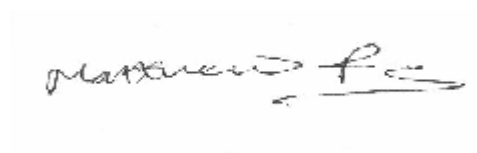
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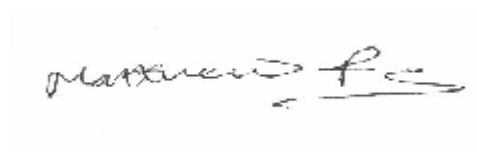
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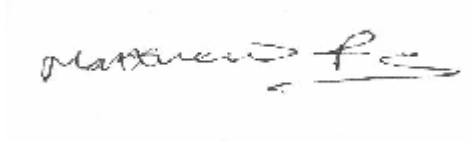
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## Abstract

This thesis examines how faith-based organisations (FBOs) engage at the sub-state level in the UK. Despite the important political role played by religion historically, in contrast to Scotland, FBO engagement has received very limited attention in the cases of post-devolution Wales and Northern Ireland. By conducting a comparative study of these two cases, the thesis addresses the central research question: 'In what ways have faith-based organisations engaged with devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK'.

In terms of its structure, the thesis is divided into two parts. The first half provides the foundation for the empirical study by assessing the current literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. Following this, it establishes the theoretical framework by conceptualising the FBO as a pressure group. This also informs the research questions, variables and hypotheses investigated. The second half of the thesis reports on the empirical case study based research. The findings highlight how FBOs engaged with devolved political institutions by adapting their political advocacy structures. Each FBO has pursued an insider strategy, with strongly rooted FBOs often supplementing it with an outsider strategy. In response, the majority of FBOs have received a privileged insider status from government, with the exception of weakly rooted FBOs in Northern Ireland. As regards effectiveness, strongly rooted FBOs are well placed to act as effective pressure groups, as are weakly rooted FBOs if they have identified resources desired by decision makers and are in circumstances where a government has established sponsored structures for faith communities.

This thesis' main contribution is its empirical study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland. More general insights are achieved by triangulating the findings with existing studies from the Scottish case. The thesis also contributes more widely to the literature on religion and politics in the UK, pressure group theory and to the privatisation and de-privatisation of religion literature.

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## Abbreviations

ACTS- Action of Churches Together in Scotland

APGEMC- All Party Group on Ethnic Minority Communities

BBC- British Broadcasting Corporation

BIC- Belfast Islamic Centre

CARE- Christian Action Research Education

CCMS- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools

CES- Catholic Education Service

CFF- Community's Faith Forum

DUP-Democratic Unionist Party

EU- European Union

FBO- Faith-Based Organisation

LCO- Legislative Competence Motion

LGBT- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender

MCW- Muslim Council of Wales

MLA- Member of the Legislative Assembly

MP- Member of Parliament

MSP- Member of the Scottish Parliament

NI- Northern Ireland

NICCOSA- Northern Ireland Catholic Council on Social Affairs

NIIFF- Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Council

NIMFA- Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association

PSNI- Police Service Northern Ireland

SACRE- Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

SDLP- Socialist Democratic and Labour Party

SNP- Scottish National Party

TRC- Transferor Representative Council

UK- United Kingdom

UN- United Nations

USA- United States of America

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# Faith-Based Political Engagement at the Sub-state Level in the UK

The Cases of Wales and Northern Ireland

# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **1.1 The aims of this study**

This thesis examines how faith-based organisations (FBOs) have engaged with devolved political institutions in the UK. The ‘FBO’ will be defined in greater detail in section 2, but it can broadly be understood as an organisation with a clear agenda which is influenced by faith. While studies of religion and conflict (e.g. Appleby 2000, Fox 2002, Jeurgensmeyer 2008) and the relationship between religion and identity, and religion and nationalism (e.g. Jeurgensmeyer 1994, Preica 2004, Sutton 2013) are common areas of study in political science, research into how FBOs attempt to influence political systems and public policy have received less attention. Support for the secularisation thesis in the first half of the twentieth century, which predicted that religion would significantly decrease in its public role, with some variants of the theory foreseeing the disappearance of religion altogether (Fox 2013: 17) was almost unanimous. Consequently, scholarship that studied how FBOs engaged in the political sphere or whether these organisations were developing new attempts or strategies of engagement were limited. Instead, the dominant narrative in the literature was one of decline and the privatisation of religion (Toft et al 2013:74). While religion and FBOs have retreated into the private sphere, there has, since the 1980s, been a widening scholarship which asserts that religion has re-entered the public sphere. José Casanova (1994) illustrated the resurgence of religion through examples of powerful FBOs such as the Catholic Church in Poland and Brazil and Evangelical Protestantism in America. Casanova (2001) has since widened his argument beyond the West, to include Islamic countries such as Iran, Turkey and Indonesia.

The most in-depth body of literature which gives attention to the role of FBO political engagement at the national level examines the political system of the United States of America. This literature assessed the influence of the Christian Right on both electoral politics and public policy (e.g. Bruce 1998, Green et al 2003, Wilcox and Robinson 2010). It has pointed to the two fold agenda of the Christian Right in mobilizing the faithful to elect a 'Christian' President as well as lobbying decision makers to impose a Christian morality within the US political system and its public policy. This scholarship has also extended to the study of religion and faith-based lobbying beyond the Christian Right to other faith communities within the US political system (see Fowler et al 2014).

Another national political arena in which a growing literature studying FBO engagement has emerged is the UK's Westminster political system. Studies such as Moyser's (1985) and subsequently Medhurst and Moyser's (1988) analysis of the Church of England's political engagement and Thompson's (1997) discussion of fundamentalist Christian organisations lobbying Westminster on sexual morality, amongst other issues, were early contributions to this literature. However, as the UK political system became more susceptible to FBO engagement owing to New Labour's 'third way' approach, encouraging FBOs amongst other third sector organisations to take part in public policy making (see Dinham 2008), the study of FBO engagement in the UK also broadened. Indeed, New Labour's involvement of faith organisations in providing services, bridging social capital and social cohesion led to a swathe of literature examining FBO engagement with public policy in the UK (e.g. Furbey and Macey 2005, Dinham and Lowndes 2008, Dinham 2008, Dinham 2009). New Labour's interest in engaging with minority faith communities has also led to a literature on minority faith-based political engagement, particularly amongst the Muslim



community (McCallum 2011, O'Toole 2012, O'Toole et al 2013, DeHanas et al 2013, Peace 2015). The liberalisation of UK equality law since the early 2000s has also led scholars to highlight the conflict between LGBT and conservative Christian organisations in Britain through a small body of literature on FBO efforts to lobby on questions of sexuality (Hunt 2003, 2011, 2014, Kettell 2013). Comparative studies across Europe, allow for greater theorising of FBO engagement and offer rich insights into how FBOs engage politically in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (e.g. Warner and Wenner 2006, Pfaff and Gill 2006, Fink 2009, Silvestri 2009, 2010, Kreienbrink and Bodenstein 2010).

A smaller body of literature with regards to faith-based political engagement at the supra-national level examines FBO engagement in the context of the European Union (EU). While a considerable amount of this scholarship discusses the role of 'Christianity' in the narrative of the EU and European citizenship (Schlesinger and Foret 2006, Foret 2010, Ramadan 2013), research has also assessed how FBOs attempt to influence decision makers within the EU, particularly as the Amsterdam Treaty created opportunities for faith-based engagement in 1999 (Steven 2010, Leustean 2011, Turner 2013, Bollmann 2013). Likewise, a small literature on FBO engagement in the United Nations (UN) discusses the openness of the UN to faith-based engagement, as well as the mobilisation and strategies of FBOs at the UN (see Berger 2003, Lehmann 2016, Stensvold 2016). This body of literature is not as well developed as the study of FBO engagement at the national level, but scholarship on these arenas is increasing.

Scholarship focusing on the national and supra-national levels has therefore been developing over the last twenty years, but there is limited literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level. The existing literature on FBO engagement within the UK sub-state

political systems will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, but for now it is important to simply note the lack of a systematic study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level. Having identified this gap in the literature, this thesis examines FBO political engagement at the sub-state level. This study examines the sub-state level in the UK, because of the important role religion has played in these regions historically and because the circumstances in which power was devolved to these regions provides potential opportunities for FBO engagement. Wales and Northern Ireland, the sub-state regions of the UK which have received the least attention in terms of scholarship on FBO engagement are selected for study. In light of this, FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK is examined based on the following central research question:

‘In what ways have faith-based organisations engaged with devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’

In order to investigate the central research question in the case of Wales and Northern Ireland in a holistic sense, three secondary research questions have been selected. These secondary research questions enable the study to examine each aspect of a FBO’s engagement from its capacity to engage, to how it goes about engaging, to whether it is successful in its engagement at the sub state level. The secondary research questions are as follows:

1. ‘What type of political advocacy structures have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’
2. ‘What type of strategies have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’

3. 'Are faith-based organisations at the sub-state level in the UK well placed to act as effective pressure groups in the decision making process?'

The sub-state level is a valuable area of study as it has become an important political arena across Europe (see Hooghe et al 2010: 52-55). Regions in almost every western European state have some level of legislative and fiscal responsibility (see Keating 2013: 106). A number of policy areas which FBOs have traditionally engaged with have been devolved to the sub-state level, reflecting Keating and McEwen's assertion (2005: 413) that the role of sub-state governments in social policy fields has greatly expanded. This includes areas such as education, welfare, social care and health, areas in which FBOs have traditionally taken an interest. The sub-state has become an arena which holds considerable political power and therefore should not be ignored by political scientists wanting to understand political actors and their power and influence in the twenty-first century. Consequently, it is important to analyse the way that FBOs that traditionally operated at the state level have adapted their structures in order to engage with the devolved institutions, as well as the way in which FBOs traditionally centred at the sub-state level have responded to the devolution of these policy competencies.

There are also a number of reasons why it is valuable to examine FBO engagement in the particular context of the devolved UK. Historically, FBOs wielded a good deal of political power at the sub-state level in the UK. For instance, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland's annual General Assembly was considered for many years as the closest institution Scotland had to a National Parliament (Keating 2010: 93-94). In Wales, politically astute nonconformists and their allies in the Liberal Party joined together to disestablish the Church of England in Wales in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Morgan, 1999: 229-230). Religious

ideas and symbols have also played a key role in creating a wealth of ideological concepts in Northern Ireland's society (Mitchell 2011), particularly in relation to its political conflict between 1968 and 1998.

The political engagement of FBOs with the devolved political institutions of the UK is also a salient area because of the political circumstance in which power was devolved to the sub-state level. Many believed that political devolution would provide a 'new politics' at the sub-state level (see McAllister 2000, McEvoy 2006a, Cairney and McGarvey 2013: 11) and New Labour's devolution project was projected as an attempt to modernise and revitalise Britain's democratic process (Blair 1998: 17). Those in favour of devolution hoped that new democratic institutions would usher in an age of opportunity for third sector organisations and a wide range of interests to engage with the policy process (see Chaney and Fevre 2001, Osborne 2003, Cairney and McGarvey 2013: 12). Moreover, in Scotland, civil society, including FBOs, played an important part in shaping the devolution settlement, leading to a prominent role for third sector and pressure groups in Holyrood's policy process (Cairney and McGarvey 2013: 11). The devolution settlement in Wales was designed so that the National Assembly for Wales could be an institution inclusive in its consultation (Chaney and Fevre 2001) with its statutory duty to consult the voluntary sector (Chaney 2004). Similarly, the Belfast Agreement brought power sharing government to Stormont, with government departments expected to consult widely throughout both communities (Osborne 2003: 350). The agreement also enshrined a far-reaching equality agenda as part of the revived Northern Ireland institution (see McCrudden 1998, Beveridge et al 2000, Osborne 2003) which in theory could provide opportunities for non-Christian FBOs to engage politically within the sub-state political system.

On this basis, political devolution potentially offers a wide range of organisations and interests with new opportunities to engage with the devolved political institutions at the sub-state level. When examining interest groups more broadly, Keating et al (2009) noted that interests have consolidated around the devolved institutions, taking advantage of opportunities to lobby in a way that had not been available before political devolution. Furthermore, a range of studies have pointed to a variety of organisations engaging at the sub-state level in the UK across a range of policy areas (Jordan and Halpin 2006, Lyall 2007, Chaney 2007, 2016, Royles 2007, Cairney 2007, Holden and Hawkins 2013, Keating and Wilson 2014, and Rumbul 2013). Similarly, while secularisation is a reality in different parts of the UK, particularly Wales and Scotland (see Brown 1997, Brierly 1997, Chambers 2004, Davie 2015), Chambers and Thompson's (2005a) research claims that devolution in Wales has created conditions for FBOs to potentially re-enter the public sphere. In light of this, it is of academic interest to examine how FBOs have engaged in greater detail. By analysing how FBOs have adapted to political devolution between 1998/9 and 2016, the strategies they have developed and the extent to which they are well placed to act as effective pressure groups, this thesis addresses a gap in the literature by analysing how institutions which traditionally wielded a high level of political power and social control within Wales and Northern Ireland are faring in today's sub-state political systems.

## **1.2 The Faith-Based Organisation: A Definition**

Before outlining the structure of this thesis, it is important to define the faith-based-organisation. The discussion begins with an examination of the faith community, followed by a detailed definition of the FBO within this wider context. As part of this, Clarke's (2008:

27-31) typology of FBOs is presented, and the decision to focus on the 'representative' and 'socio-political' FBO is justified.

In order to define the FBO, it is important to understand the context in which it exists; the faith community. There is no explicit definition of the faith community, with many policy papers using the term in a vague undefined manner (e.g. Home Office Faith Communities 2004). However, Dinham (2009, 2010) offers the fullest explanation of the faith community in the literature. Dinham (2010: 538) notes the oxymoronic nature of the faith community, noting that it can be based in one location, or can stretch across a number of locations. Religious establishments and denominations are therefore faith communities in their own right, but are also located within wider, over-arching faith communities and are key players within them. For instance, a faith community can revolve around a building such as a church or mosque which has its own space for interactions, its own shared history, values and activities common to its members or the faith community can constitute a national or even international entity (Dinham 2010: 538-9). This thesis therefore understands the faith community as a particular space within which the interactions of a faith can happen. This can be a situated faith community such as a church or mosque or an over-arching faith community such as a national faith community or an international network.

If FBOs are therefore located within the faith community, it is important to define the FBO within the wider space of the faith community, something a number of definitions fail to do. For instance, the AmeriCorps definition (in Ferris 2005: 313) is problematic because it considers religious 'congregations' as FBOs, failing to explain the difference between the faith community and the FBO. Kramer et al's definition (2002: 2) also has its

problems because it does not allow for standalone FBOs which do not hold religious services or worship to be FBOs. This is an issue because it would not include organisations such as Christian Aid or the Muslim Council of Britain as FBOs. These organisations are directly connected to churches or mosques, but they are not located within them, instead they stand alone within wider faith communities.

Clarke and Jennings' (2008: 6) definition provides a much more open definition of the FBO. It distinguishes between the faith community and the FBO and recognises both the FBO as a standalone organisation within the wider faith community and as an organisation which can exist within a more situated faith community. They define the FBO as: 'any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within that faith.' (Clarke and Jennings 2008: 6). One problem with this definition is that it has a rather loose understanding of the connection between an organisation and a faith, with the organisation only needing to be inspired by a faith, rather than being driven directly by the tenets of a faith. This understanding of the term 'faith' in 'faith-based organisation' is problematic because at one point in history most Western European organisations within civil society would have had some relationship to a faith or a religious institution. Therefore, many organisations which are still active today in Western Europe have historic roots in a faith of some kind. For instance, Clarke and Jennings' (2008: 6) definition would allow for groups such as the Scouts, Urdd Gobaith Cymru or the Red Cross, whose founders were motivated on the basis of their faith (see Edwards 1943, Warren 1986 and Morgenstern 1979) to be categorised as FBOs. This is problematic because while these organisations have

been 'inspired' by a faith, it is not appropriate to regard them as FBOs, but instead as secular organisations which have roots, a tradition or a history connected to a faith.

It is possible to firm up Clarke and Jennings' definition of faith by drawing on Sider and Unruh's (2004: 119-120) scale of faith, set out in Figure 1, which underlines the extent to which different organisations are driven and directed by faith.



Figure 1: Role of faith in faith-based organisations

Organisation	Role of Faith
Faith-permeated organisations	Faith is integrated into the organisation's content and is seen to be an essential dimension to the programme's effectiveness.
Faith-centred organisations	Similarly to the above category the organisation is strongly connected to the religious community through funding sources and affiliation and requires the governing board and most staff to share the organisation's faith commitments. The programmes are designed so that participants can readily opt out of these activities and still receive the programme's benefits.
Faith-affiliated organisations	The organisation is connected to faith through its founders alone. The programme will incorporate little or no explicitly religious content but might affirm faith in a general way.
Faith-background organisations	The organisation looks secular, but might have a historical tie to a faith. Religious experience does not contribute to programme outcomes.

On this basis, organisations such as the Muslim Council of Britain can be viewed as a 'faith-permeated' organisation because faith is evident in the way it is governed and in its advocacy role.<sup>1</sup> An organisation such as Christian Aid would be 'faith-centred' because its staff, funding and affiliation has a strong connection to a faith, while its programmes are

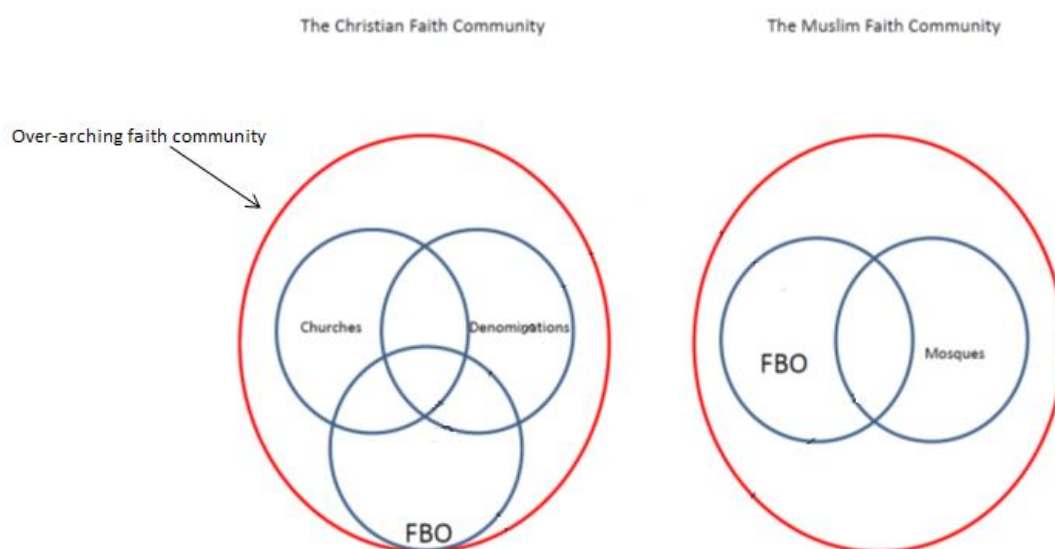
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<sup>1</sup> See [www.mcb.org/about-mcb/](http://www.mcb.org/about-mcb/)

designed so that participants can readily opt out of these activities and still receive the programme's benefits.<sup>2</sup> Unlike Clarke and Jennings (2008: 6) which define a FBO as an organisation which derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from a faith, this thesis views FBOs as organisations permeated and centred in a faith. In understanding 'faith' in this way, the thesis focuses on organisations whose aims are all based in furthering the denomination, institution or organisation's faith based world view. It therefore understands the FBO as: Any organisation that's agenda, direction and purpose is permeated with or centrally based in the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within the faith.

The FBO is on this basis located within the wider structure of the faith community, along-side or over-lapping with, religious institutions and denominations such as churches or mosques, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The faith-based organisation and the faith community



<sup>2</sup> See [www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutus/who/aims/our\\_aims.aspx](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutus/who/aims/our_aims.aspx)

Now that the FBO has been defined, it is possible to outline the type of FBOs this thesis examines. Clarke (2008:27-31) outlines a range of different FBOs and their function in his typology of FBOs, presented in figure 3. This thesis concentrates on the representative FBO and the socio-political FBO.

Figure 3: Clarke's (2008) typology of FBOs

<b>Faith-Based Organisation</b>	<b>Description</b>
Representative Organisations / Apex Bodies	These FBOs rule on doctrinal matters, govern the faithful and represent them through engagement with the state and other actors.
Charitable / Development Faith Based Organisations	These FBOs deal with issues of poverty and social exclusion.
Socio-Political Faith-Based Organisations	FBOs with a political role which do not exist within or as part of a religious institution or denomination.
Missionary Faith-Based Organisations	FBOs involved with proselytization.
Radical / Illegal / Terrorist Organisations	FBOs which justify radical, illegal and terrorist activity on the grounds of a faith.

The aim of this thesis is best carried out by studying the representative and socio-political FBO because they have the clear function of attempting to engage with political systems. Both have clear political roles of representation and mobilisation, and hence their actions coincide with that which the central research question endeavours to understand. Clarke (2008: 25) notes that representative FBO 'governs the faithful and represents them through engagement with the state'. It would therefore make sense that the representative FBO attempts to represent its faith community by influencing public policy as it engages with different aspects of the state. Likewise, this thesis' interest in faith engagement with a wide range of policy areas is encapsulated in Clarke's (2008: 25) definition of the socio-

political FBO, when he notes that it mobilises ‘social groups on the basis of faith identities’. In mobilising social groups on this basis, the socio-political FBO is, in all likelihood, looking to influence decision makers and public policy decisions. Clarke’s (2008: 27) description of the socio-political FBO states that ‘they interpret and deploy faith as a political construct, organizing and mobilizing social groups on the basis of faith identities, but in pursuit of broader political objectives’.

### **1.3 The structure of the thesis.**

Having outlined the aim of this thesis and defined the FBO, the structure of this thesis is now presented. The thesis is structured in two main parts. The first part establishes the building blocks for carrying out the study. Chapter 2 assesses the existing literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level and makes a strong case for this research project. Chapter 3 advances a theoretical framework for the empirical research. Chapter 4 outlines the research design and methodology used for the empirical research. The second part of the thesis outlines the research findings responding to the central research question. Chapters 5 and 6, the empirical chapters, present the research findings on Wales and Northern Ireland. Chapter 7 then analyses the research findings and discusses the practical implications of these findings. Finally, Chapter 8 presents the thesis’ conclusions and contributions.

The second chapter assesses the literature regarding FBO engagement at the sub-state level in greater depth. The chapter analyses the literature and points to the dearth of studies on Wales and Northern Ireland and the lack of a comparative study at the sub-state level. Secondly, the range of theoretical frameworks used to analyse FBO engagement in the literature is examined. After assessing civil society theory and social movement theory,

pressure group theory is posited to provide the more powerful explanatory framework for studying FBO engagement at the sub-state level.

The third chapter advances a theoretical framework for the empirical study. The chapter begins by justifying and defining the term 'pressure group', before critically assessing pressure group theory. The chapter ends by assessing the merits of pressure group theory as a theoretical framework for studying FBO engagement at the sub-state level.

The fourth chapter is divided into two parts; research design and methodology. The research design section begins by outlining secondary research questions which together contribute to answering the central research question. Dependent and independent variables and eleven testable hypotheses derived from the theoretical literature are then presented. The independent variable 'sub-state autonomy' is used to select Wales and Northern Ireland as case studies. The independent variables 'roots in society' and 'theological orientation' are used to select the FBO case studies for the cases of Wales and Northern Ireland using a case study matrix. In the case of Wales, the Church in Wales, the Catholic Church in England and Wales, The Muslim Council of Wales (MCW) and Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales are selected for study. In Northern Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Catholic Church in Ireland, the Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC) and the Caleb Foundation are selected. The methodology section of the chapter begins by outlining the thesis' case study strategy. The decision to focus the study of FBO engagement on education, constitutional issues, the Human Transplantation (Wales) Act in the case of Wales and same-sex marriage in the case of Northern Ireland is discussed. The chapter then

outlines the thesis' method of data collection and analysis before discussing the issues of bias, reliability and generalisability.

The second part of the thesis presents the empirical research and analysis. Chapters 5 and 6 examine the central research question by presenting the research findings in relation to political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness. The findings in Chapter 5 indicate that each FBO selected in the case of Wales is a territorial organisation apart from the Catholic Church in Wales which has experienced partial 'institutional isomorphism'. Each FBO has increased its capacity to engage with the devolved institutions by appointing staff members, apart from the MCW which has developed a voluntary based political advocacy structure. The strongly rooted FBOs supplement this strategy with a responsible outsider strategy to a greater extent than weakly rooted FBOs. In return, each FBO receives a level of specialist insider status. Here, factors such as resources which can be exchanged for privileged insider status are important, whether this is education provision, as in the case of the strongly rooted FBOs, or as a representative of a faith community or 'faith' in its wider sense, as in the case with the weakly rooted FBOs. While the weakly rooted organisations have weaker political advocacy structures than the strongly rooted organisations, faith structures, such as the Faith Communities Forum, assist weakly rooted organisations in overcoming their inability to be as proactive in their engagement as organisations with staff-based political advocacy structures. Even so, it is also noted that weakly rooted FBOs' reliance on these state sponsored faith structures could be counter-productive if they become what is termed in the pressure group literature as 'prisoners', unable to criticise or challenge decision makers.

The investigation of the Northern Ireland case in chapter 6 finds that apart from the Caleb Foundation, each FBO has adapted its political advocacy structure's in order to engage with the devolved institutions by appointing staff members. In this case, decision makers have conferred specialist or core insider status on groups with strong roots within society, but those with weak roots have not had this status conferred upon them. Theology does appear to reduce the Caleb Foundation's ability to have specialist or core insider status conferred upon it by decision makers, but roots in society appear to play a much greater role. This can be seen in the privileged access and status bestowed on the Catholic and Presbyterian churches in the areas of education, same-sex marriage and constitutional affairs which are not available to the BIC and the Caleb Foundation. The Catholic and Presbyterian churches have resources which decision makers require and hence are rewarded with this access and status at the expense of other FBOs. This is most evident in the stark contrast between FBO effectiveness. Weakly rooted FBOs are unable to access the political system owing to under developed political advocacy structures combined with a lack of core or specialist insider status and no appropriate state sponsored faith structures sponsored by the executive.

Chapter 7 examines the central research questions in relation to the findings in both Wales and Northern Ireland and examines their practical implications. It posits that a greater level of sub-state autonomy is found to lead to increased capacity in the political advocacy structures of FBOs. The role of roots within society is noted to have some influence on FBO strategy, status and effectiveness with theological orientation only having a minimal influence. The chapter argues that in both cases strongly rooted and weakly rooted FBOs pursue insider strategies, but that strongly rooted FBOs also supplement this

with a responsible outsider strategy, using their staff capacity and position within society to do so. Strongly rooted FBOs also receive specialist or core insider status because of the resources they are able to use in negotiations with decision makers. Weakly rooted FBOs on the other hand receive peripheral insider status unless they are able to identify resources (such as facilitating government consultation with difficult to reach communities) which they can exchange with decision makers in return for specialist or core insider status. Likewise, strongly rooted FBOs are more likely than weakly rooted FBOs to be well placed to act as effective pressure groups. This is because strongly rooted FBOs have appropriate political advocacy structures to engage in the devolved political systems and have specific resources they can exchange for core or specialist insider status. However, weakly rooted FBOs are able to overcome this if state sponsored faith structures exist, giving them direct access to government decision makers. Chapter 7 concludes by examining the practical implications of the findings for FBOs and devolved institutions. Here, the practical implications are separated into four main sub-sections. This includes the implications for FBOs such as the opportunities political devolution has provided for FBO engagement, the suitability of the insider strategy supplemented with a responsible outsider strategy and the role of resources in FBO engagement with decision makers. In the case of the devolved institutions, the implications include the role state sponsored faith structures can play in mediating weakly rooted FBO engagement.

The thesis concludes by examining its contribution to the wider literature. The thesis confirms pressure group theory's utility as a theoretical framework for understanding FBO engagement. It is useful for understanding how FBOs adapt their political advocacy structures for engaging in different arenas, the strategies they utilise, the status conferred



upon them by government decision makers and their effectiveness. Furthermore, the thesis adapts conceptual frameworks in a way that enhances their utility for studying FBO engagement. For instance, the thesis contributes to the literature regarding faith communities and FBOs by offering broader definitions of the terms. It also adapts pressure group theory for the study FBO engagement. In this respect, the thesis notes the importance of Grant's (1995: 20) 'prisoner' insider status, which has been side-lined by Maloney et al (1994). The thesis also provides a more detailed criterion by which to measure effectiveness in analysing the political advocacy structure of FBOs, FBO strategies as well as the status conferred upon FBOs and whether the FBOs met their objectives. These adaptations provide a much more detailed measurement of effectiveness than is currently found in the pressure group literature.

Finally, the way in which the study's findings address the broader literature on the privatisation and de-privatisation of religion is examined. In the main, the empirical findings concur with the 'de-privatisation of religion' thesis as FBOs have engaged effectively in the devolved political sphere. However, weakly rooted organisations appear to require state sponsored faith structures if they are to act as effective pressure groups, demonstrating the fragility of this political engagement in some cases. The conclusion then looks ahead to possible future research avenues, and to the possibility of developing further the conclusions of this thesis by studying FBO engagement at the sub-state level beyond the UK. The possibility of extending the research to a 'multi-level' study of how FBOs adapt between the different political arenas is also discussed.

In sum, this thesis demonstrates that the devolved executives and legislatures are open to faith, although we see an unevenness in the way strongly rooted Christian

denominations receive preferential treatment in Northern Ireland at the expense of weakly rooted, particularly non-Christian, FBOs. Even so, FBOs at the sub-state level have responded to this openness by increasing the capacity of their political advocacy structures to engage with the devolved institutions. While a majority of FBOs have had specialist or core insider status conferred upon them by decision makers, some of the weakly rooted organisations have had peripheral insider status conferred upon them. However, state sponsored faith structures can aid weakly rooted organisations in overcoming this. From this perspective, state sponsored faith structures are positive, but only if they avoid weakly rooted FBOs becoming prisoners of the devolved institutions. The case of the sub-state level concurs with the 'de-privatisation of religion' thesis, but also reveals how fragile the emergence and engagement of weakly rooted FBOs can be owing to their reliance on state sponsored faith structures.

## **1.4 Contribution of this thesis**

This thesis primarily provides an empirical contribution in its study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level. Consequently, the thesis contributes to four main bodies of literature. Firstly, the thesis contributes to the literature on the role of religion in the UK's sub-state political systems. Its study of eight FBO case studies across Wales and Northern Ireland can be used to develop generalisations regarding FBO engagement more widely in these under-studied regions. On this basis, the findings can be triangulated with the literature on FBO engagement in Scotland to provide some broader conclusions. The thesis also makes a theoretical contribution to the small body of literature which understands FBOs as pressure groups and to refining pressure group theory more widely. The thesis' conclusions also feed

into the wider discussion regarding secularisation and the de-privatisation of religion in the UK and beyond.

## **Conclusion**

We have seen that scholarship relating to faith-based political engagement at the national and supra-national level has increased in recent years as scholars have begun to recognise the role of religion and FBOs within the political system. Even so, the study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level has remained under-studied, with few systematic and comparative studies. The rise of the sub-state level and the devolution of policy competencies of interest to FBOs further emphasises the importance of studying FBO engagement in this political arena. Furthermore, the circumstances in which power was devolved in the UK strengthens the case for studying the sub-state level in the Wales and Northern Ireland. This study opens the way for future research on FBO engagement at the sub-state level beyond the UK and to the possibility of extending the research to a multi-level analysis of FBO engagement at the sub-state, national and supranational level.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapter indicated that there has been a steady increase in the literature on FBO engagement with the political sphere at the supra-national and national level. However, it also noted the limited attention given to FBO engagement at the sub-state level. It drew attention to the sub-state level as an arena with an increasing level of constitutional power, particularly in areas of social policy in which FBOs have historically been active. Hence, it is pertinent that attention is given to FBO engagement at the sub-state level, particularly in the context of the UK.

In light of the gap in the literature identified in the first chapter, this chapter provides a more detailed analysis of the extant literature regarding FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. While this thesis focuses on Wales and Northern Ireland, the literature on Scotland will also be critically assessed. Scotland has received more attention to date and the literature provides valuable insights into the dynamics between FBOs and devolved institutions at the sub-state level. It is also pertinent to examine the literature on Scotland given the similar context and timing of devolution across the UK.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first part investigates the literature on FBO engagement in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in the twentieth century prior to 1998/9. The literature thus offers an historical basis to understanding FBO engagement in a UK context. The second section examines literature on FBO engagement since 1998/9. This literature can be separated into three main segments. The first segment

consists of literature on religion and politics in the UK and on pressure groups in the UK. Unsurprisingly, these studies are brief in their analysis, but do illustrate that FBOs are active at the sub-state level, furthering the argument for studying FBO engagement in this arena. The second segment investigates literature which focuses on the opportunity structures available for FBO engagement post-devolution. These studies consequently do not focus on FBO engagement, but point to ways in which FBOs have responded to these opportunities. The third segment of literature examines theoretically based, in-depth studies, of FBO engagement at the sub-state level. These studies analyse FBO engagement, and offer a nuanced analysis of FBO strategy and effectiveness, particularly by drawing upon pressure group theory. However, these studies have only been conducted to date in relation to the Scottish case. The final section of the chapter analyses the theoretical frameworks utilised to analyse FBO engagement in the literature on the sub-state, national and the supra-national levels. It argues that while each framework provides a way in which to analyse FBO engagement, pressure group theory affords the more powerful explanatory framework for studying FBO engagement at the sub-state level.

## **2.1. Literature focusing on FBO engagement pre 1998/9.**

### **2.1.1 Religion and Society**

Because FBOs have traditionally wielded a substantial level of influence in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, there are a number of studies on the historical role of religion in these societies. Brown's (1997) work on religion and society in Scotland since 1707, Morgan's (2011a) study of Christian religion and society in Wales in the twentieth century, Hughes' (1999) history of the Roman Catholic Church and society in Wales between 1916-1962 and Bradshaw and Keogh's (2002) volume on Christianity in Ireland are examples of studies

which reference the historical role of religion at the sub-state level. These studies are not primarily political, offering instead a history of religious life, practice and institutions in the regions. Even so, these studies do discuss political engagement as part of their historical analysis, pointing to the traditionally powerful role some FBOs had within these societies. Brown (1997: 98-101, 143-147) notes the way in which the Church of Scotland was very influential at the local level when it came to school boards and alcohol consumption throughout the nineteenth and part of the twentieth century. Likewise, Morgan (2011a:30-37) discusses the role of the Nonconformist denominations in the campaign to disestablish the Church of England at the start of the twentieth century. Hughes (1999: 131-157) discusses how the Catholic Church lobbied for Catholic Education funding in Wales during the twentieth century, and notes the opposition it faced from Nonconformists and local authority leaders in Wales. A range of the Catholic Church's political strategies are also noted, including lobbying MPs and education boards for funding for Catholic schools (Hughes 1999:133) as well as the use of figureheads speaking publicly in its favour (Hughes 1999: 153-154). In the case of Ireland, Keogh (2002:203-230) notes the role of the churches on education boards in Ireland, the relationship between the Church of Ireland, the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland and the British state and the way in which the Catholic Church embodied Irish national sentiment. While these historical studies only briefly discuss FBO political engagement, in a rather descriptive manner, they underline some important issues by pointing to how politicised religion and the role of FBOs have been at the sub-state level in the UK historically. They also note the historical role of FBOs in policy areas that are devolved post-1998/9.

### 2.1.2 Historical Studies focusing on FBO political engagement

The literature also contains historical studies that place a greater focus on FBO political engagement. Studies such as Davies' (2008) work on the history of the Council of Churches in Wales and Mitchell's (2011) study of the role of religion in Northern Ireland's political conflict go into some detail. Works such as McGrath's (2000) study of the Catholic Church and Catholic education in Northern Ireland; Ó Corráin's (2006) work on the Irish churches and the state in Ireland and Northern Ireland between 1949 and 1973 and Forrester's (1993) article on the Church of Scotland's engagement with public policy during the second half of the twentieth century provide more detailed insights into the political engagement of FBOs at the sub-state level as they focus on specific policy areas. Once again, the discussion in these studies is rather descriptive, but they underline a number of important points.

Davies' (2008) study mainly discusses the history of the ecumenical movement in Wales, and how Christian denominations slowly moved towards working together during the twentieth century. In doing so, it underlines the political engagement of the organisation in a range of policy areas. For instance, the author discusses how the organisation met with the Secretary of State for Wales to discuss industrial planning in Wales in 1972 (Davies 2008:109-111). However, the Council's political action emerges most clearly in its engagement with Wales' self-government debate (Davies 2008: 81-100). Davies also notes the political advocacy structure of both the Council and Cytûn. The author notes that while the Council of Churches was supportive of self-government in 1979 (Davies 2008:92), Cytûn's political advocacy structure did not allow it to take a position on devolution during the 1997 referendum. Instead, he notes Cytûn's work to assist denominations in coming to a position on political and other matters (Davies 2008: 95).

Likewise in the case of Northern Ireland, Mitchell's (2011) study attempts to understand the role of religion in creating boundaries between the Catholic and Protestant community. This includes looking at the theological concepts found in both Catholicism and Protestantism in Northern Ireland, but also at the churches' engagement in politics. Mitchell's study discusses the way in which the churches in Northern Ireland represent their communities to government, speaking out publicly on issues of importance. However, Mitchell is also clear about the tensions which exist between the churches and their respective communities. She notes the challenges for Protestant churches to represent the unionist community due to fragmentation, but a more unified Catholic Church has in recent times also come across opposition to its representative position from within the nationalist community. However, Mitchell's (2011: 55) assertion regarding the limited influence of the churches only sets the tone of the debate by focusing on their engagement as leaders speaking publicly on behalf of their community, rather than examining their policy engagement.

McGrath's (2000) study on the Catholic Church and Catholic schools in Northern Ireland presents an historical analysis of how the Church has campaigned for fully funded Catholic education in Northern Ireland. Despite being an historical study, rather than a political analysis, the volume offers a more informative analysis of the Church's political engagement prior to devolution in 1998, going into much greater detail than Mitchell's (2011) study. As a result, McGrath studies the Church's private engagement with decision makers, providing a more nuanced analysis of the Church's engagement in this policy area.

McGrath (2000:8) notes the Church's political advocacy structure, noting that the Bishops had oversight of the Church's strategy when it came to education. McGrath (2000:



14) notes the tensions that have existed between funding for Catholic education and handing over control of schools and the curriculum to the state. McGrath (2000) also underlines the two-pronged strategy of the Catholic Church in education. On the one hand, the Church worked to ensure Catholic education is funded, trying to limit the control of politicians over Catholic Education, while also attempting to defend the principle of segregated education, at times in coalition with Protestant clerics and unionist politicians (McGrath 2000: 5). McGrath's (2000) study goes further than most of the historical studies in its discussion of the Catholic Church's effectiveness. He provides a mixed review of its effectiveness, recognizing that while the Church had success in gaining financial aid for its schools, it was not the Church's lobbying which ultimately led to full state funding in 1993, but instead government realization that Catholic Schools were under-funded, leading to a neglect of the community's educational needs (McGrath 2000: 248). This represents a nuanced discussion of the Catholic Church's effectiveness in engaging with education policy, but the author does not utilise a specific criterion to analyse effectiveness.

Likewise, Ó Corráin (2006: 140) discusses the Northern Ireland case and role of the Catholic Bishops as guardians of the Catholic/nationalist community acting as their 'default spokespeople' on a wide range of issues from education to welfare to civil rights. While the Catholic Bishops were hostile to the Stormont regime after partition, they became more agreeable over time, and post 1945 began focusing on improving the position of Catholics within Northern Ireland rather than pushing for the reunification of Ireland (Ó Corráin 2006: 115-116). The author notes that without politicians to represent the Catholic/nationalist community, politicians looked to the Bishops as community leaders (Ó Corráin 2006: 148). The Bishops campaigned for education funding for Catholic schools, met with British

politicians attempting to broker peace in Northern Ireland (Ó Corráin 2006: 120-132, 166) and fought against cuts to benefits and services which they believed disproportionately affected the Catholic/nationalist community (Ó Corráin 2006: 135).

In the case of Scotland, Forrester's (1993: 72-73) work on the Church of Scotland discusses its political advocacy structure, but its engagement with a range of policy areas is the main focus. The study analyses its engagement with some of the big questions in Scottish politics between the 1940s and 1990s, from North Sea oil to nuclear weapons to housing to benefits and income to the question of self-government (Forrester 1993: 74-75). The article offers insights into the strategies used by the Church and Nation committee, noting its use of written reports to try and influence the political debate as well as occasional lobbying via private meetings between the chairman of the Church and Nation committee and government. Even so, this short article does not go into great detail regarding the strategies pursued by the Church of Scotland in these policy areas, but instead focuses to a greater extent on the content of the written reports. As with Mitchell's (2011) study, Forrester (1993) focuses on the political engagement of the Church within the wider public debate, rather than engagement with decision makers behind closed doors. Forrester (1993) analyses the reports written by the committee, to understand how these influenced wider debates, rather than analysing their strategy of directly influencing decision makers. Despite this, Forrester (1993: 75-80) does discuss Church support for self-government and notes how it engaged with politicians and civil servants on a range of issues from nuclear arms, to housing and presented Margaret Thatcher with a copy of the General Assembly's report on poverty after her infamous 'Sermon on the Mound' at the 1988 Assembly. Even so, one is left wondering as to exactly the nature of the relationship between the Church

and Scottish Office. In fairness, the short length of this article, which covers a range of policy areas, does not have the capacity to provide a detailed analysis of FBO strategy.

While these historical studies are somewhat descriptive and do not set out how FBOs have engaged politically at the sub-state level, they act as an important background for understanding FBO engagement historically. Each of these studies offers an insight into the political advocacy structures of FBOs at the sub-state level, while Forrester (1993), McGrath's (2000) and O'Corráin's (2006) studies discuss some of the strategies utilised. McGrath's (2000) analysis of the Catholic Church's engagement with government decision makers, as well as its engagement with the wider debate, serves to underscore the need for the study of both elements in order to present the bigger picture in terms of FBO political engagement. In the case of McGrath (2000), there is also some attempt to discuss effectiveness, although no specific criteria is used to analyse this.

### 2.1.3 Literature which utilises a theoretical approach to analysing FBO engagement

The final segment of pre 1998/9 literature progresses from an historical analysis to studies that are based on theoretical frameworks that allow for a much more nuanced analysis of FBO strategies. Lynch's chapter in Boyle and Lynch's (1998) volume on the Catholic community in Scotland and Brewer, Higgins and Teeney's (2011) book on the role of the Church in Northern Ireland's peace process both focus on the role of FBOs within their respective regions, analysing both their societal engagement as well as political engagement. Lynch (1998) analyses the Church's role in education and abortion policy and its role in international aid, while Brewer et al's (2011) study focuses on the Peace Process and constitutional issues. Lynch's (1998) chapter on the Catholic Church and political action in Scotland uses interest group theory to understand how it has engaged in Scottish politics.

In his analysis, Lynch (1998: 50-53) utilises the insider/outsider distinction to illustrate how the Church mobilised its members to lobby MPs and to sign petitions while also lobbying the Scottish Office on matters relating to the curriculum in an 'insider' capacity. Lynch (1998: 55) also predicted that the devolved political system would offer the Church a more fluid environment to engage in. Likewise, Brewer et al's (2011) use of civil society theory illustrates a strategy of 'public and private', whereby the churches made cautious statements in public, 'matched by frenetic activity' in private (Brewer et al 2011: 93). This included calling for peace and calm while attempting to bring people to the table in private in order to reach a solution. The authors use a set of theoretical concepts to discuss the Church's strategy, such as 'elastic band leadership' and 'leash leadership' (Brewer et al 2011: 98). These enable the authors to identify how the Church combined front and back facing leadership where they attempted to push their communities towards an agreement from behind while attempting to reign in the more radical elements of the community. This theoretical concept could also be understood as a strategy of engagement used by the churches in order to slowly edge towards a political solution.

The use of these different theoretical frameworks allow both Lynch (1998) and Brewer et al (2011) to move away from description, to an in-depth analysis of FBO engagement. In applying these theoretical concepts, both works discuss how a range of strategies can complement each other and their ultimate impact on the wider politics of the region. In so doing, the studies offer a much more holistic picture of FBO engagement.

However, while both Lynch (1998) and Brewer et al's (2011) analysis of FBO strategy is greatly enriched by their theoretical frameworks, they do not stretch to measuring effectiveness. The authors' discussion of effectiveness goes no further than that of

McGrath's (2000). They offer a nuanced discussion surrounding the issue of effectiveness, but do not provide a means by which to measure it. For instance, Lynch (1998: 50-58) offers examples of the Church's success in influencing education legislation as well as its failure to influence the Labour party, and legislation more generally, on the issue of abortion. Likewise, Brewer et al (2011) do not offer a conclusive judgment regarding the effectiveness of churches in the political peace process, but instead leave the success and failures of the churches open for consideration. The authors note that the churches were not as confident when speaking publicly as they could have been (Brewer et al 2011: 118, 121), but also note that it is important to remember the importance of the churches working as backchannels (Brewer et al 2011: 94). One might argue that these authors have not attempted to measure effectiveness because it is difficult to know who is really influencing policy. Indeed, Lynch (1998: 62) notes the difficulties of trying to measure effectiveness as a reason for not doing so. Even so, both Lynch (1998) and Brewer et al's (2011) studies are important because they are the only studies pre 1998/9 which utilise clear theoretical frameworks for understanding FBO political engagement at the sub-state level. Despite not using a rigorous measurement of effectiveness, these frameworks have greatly enriched the studies. While Lynch's (1998) warning regarding the difficulties of measuring effectiveness should be heeded, effectiveness is a vital part of understanding FBO engagement.

In sum, the literature on FBO engagement prior to political devolution in 1998/9 is mainly historical and consequently tends to be quite descriptive. Even so, a number of important findings in these studies can act as an important backdrop to this thesis. Lynch (1998) and Brewer et al's (2000) studies also underline that by utilising a theoretical

framework, such as pressure group theory or civil society theory, it is possible to move beyond a more descriptive and one dimensional analysis.

## **2.2 Literature on FBO engagement Post 1998/9**

This section progresses to investigate literature on FBO engagement post 1998/9. The literature can be divided into three main segments. The first discusses FBO engagement both briefly and in general terms by recognising FBO activity at the sub-state level, but without analysing it in detail or in a theoretically informed manner. The second segment of the literature points to the way in which the devolved institutions at the sub-state level encourage FBO engagement. The final segment of literature focuses on FBO engagement at the sub-state level. To date, the literature only focuses on Scotland, leaving Wales and Northern Ireland under-studied. It does not examine both representative and socio-political FBOs across the sub-state level, and only concentrates on Christian FBOs, leaving non-Christian FBO engagement under-studied.

### **2.2.1 FBO Engagement within Wider Studies**

The vast majority of literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level is found within volumes published on the devolved societies post devolution, in studies on religion and FBO engagement in the UK and in works on pressure groups in the UK. The general nature of these studies means that they point to the prominent role of FBOs at the sub-state level but do not provide much in the way of detail regarding their engagement.

These studies cover a number of issues. Walker (2002: 254) notes in his brief segment on religion in Scotland that devolution has changed the dynamics of Scottish politics, and in doing so has ‘posed a challenge’ to the churches in having their voices heard.

Walker (2002: 255) argue that the Church is no longer able to rely on its 'national status', but instead has to ensure it produces 'submissions of high quality'. Both Keating (2010: 94-95) and Hill et al's (2014) studies briefly discuss the role of Action of Christians Together in Scotland (ACTS) with their Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer representing the mainstream Churches in Scotland. Keating's (2010: 94-95) short contribution analyses the political advocacy structure of ACTS, noting that it seeks to represent the different position of the Churches to the legislature and executive, in much the same way as was discussed by Davies (2008) in the case of Cytûn in the previous section. Hill et al (2014: 112) note that ACTS' Parliamentary Officer briefs churches and Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) on issues of concern, Keating (2010:95) also notes the way in which the churches clashed with the Scottish Government over Section 28 in the first Parliament, but does not go into detail regarding the strategies utilised in this case, or the Church's effectiveness. As regards Wales, Hill et al (2014: 112) reference the faith structure sponsored by the Welsh Government, the 'Faith Communities Forum', which they note has provided an opportunity for 'dialogue' on issues such as citizenship and leisure activities on a Sunday.

Watts' (2007) study on pressure groups in the UK dedicates a chapter to their engagement with devolved legislatures in the UK. The sections on Scotland and Northern Ireland highlight the engagement of an assortment of different pressure groups, and gives a short but prominent example of the Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland and Christian Action Research and Education (CARE) in Scotland (Watts 2007: 151-152, 162-163). It briefly discusses their political advocacy structures, how they have adapted to the sub-state level and their strategies. The discussion on CARE and the Evangelical Alliance further underlines the way in which UK organisations have increased their capacity by devolving authority and

appointing staff to the sub-state level (Watts 2007: 151, 162-163). While Keating's (2010: 94-95) work highlights how a territorial FBO has adapted its structures to engage with the devolved institutions, Watts (2007: 162-163) notes that UK organisations have devolved autonomy from the central state level to the sub-state level. Watts' (2007: 151-152) study provides more detailed attention to the strategies utilised by the FBOs. He notes how CARE produces its own research and uses it to respond to consultations. Likewise, Watts (2007: 162-163) notes that the Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland lobbies Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), Assembly committees and civil servants. CARE staff also meet with ministers and other decision makers. The author also refers to its influence, referenced as influencing bills such as the proposed 'Dying with Dignity' Bill and the final wording on the Section 28 legislation (Watts 2007: 151-152).

These studies do not produce a detailed analysis of FBO strategy or their effectiveness and do not examine FBO adaptation in theoretical terms, pointing to the need for further study. However, these contributions note that FBOs have been active at the sub-state level, with Watts (2007) in particular noting their lobbying activity. Despite the lack of detailed study of FBOs, the fact that Watts (2007) discusses FBO engagement in both the Scotland and Northern Ireland cases further underlines the way in which they are seen to play an active role at the sub-state level in the UK. The studies also point to the role of devolved government sponsored faith structures for FBO engagement, such as the Faith Communities Forum. Watts (2007), Keating (2010) and Hill et al (2014) highlight the way in which both territorial and UK based FBOs have adapted structurally in response to devolution. These findings raise pertinent questions regarding the extent to which other FBOs have heightened their capacity in response to political devolution.



### 2.2.2 The opportunity structures available for FBO engagement post-devolution.

While the main criticism of the literature on FBO engagement post 1998/9 so far is that it does not go into enough detail regarding FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK, there are a number of studies which do examine this in more detail. However, not all of these studies are directly focused on analysing FBO engagement. Instead, Chambers and Thompson (2005a, 2005b, 2006) and Chambers (2015) in the case of Wales and Steven (2008) in the case of Scotland and Ganiel (2008a, 2008b) in the case of Northern Ireland analyse the opportunities for FBO engagement with the Assembly post-devolution. Chambers and Thompson (2005a, 2005b, 2006) note the opportunities made available for FBO engagement by the devolved political institutions. They note the role of the government in providing FBOs with an opportunity to engage on a wide range of policy areas. Chambers and Thompson (2005b: 345) underline the opportunity the Forum provides for minority FBOs, which otherwise would not have this level of access. They also note the role of the Third Sector Partnership Council which includes FBOs as third sector organisations (Chambers and Thompson 2005a: 37, Chambers 2015: 217). Steven's (2008: 188-193) article notes how devolution has created an 'improved opportunity structure' for organisations such as the Catholic Church in Scotland. It points to the greater access to a number of social policy issues post-devolution which they wish to influence and to the way political devolution enables the organisations to change their party allegiance from the Labour Party to the Scottish National Party (SNP) if they wish, in order to provide a greater opportunity to implement their moral agenda. For Northern Ireland, Ganiel (2008a: 114-116) notes that evangelical organisations have realised they no longer have a privileged

position, leading to using levers made available by the Belfast agreement to their advantage. An example of this is the way in which traditional evangelical organisations have begun to utilise Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, which enshrines equal rights for all communities (Ganiel 2008a: 115-116).

Demonstrating how devolution has created opportunities for FBO engagement, re-engagement and a change in engagement is the purpose of these studies. However, they also point to ways in which FBOs have responded to these opportunities. Chambers and Thompson (2005a: 39, 2005b: 344, 347-348, 2006: 220) refer the way in which organisations traditionally organised at the UK level have adapted by devolving power to new branches and departments to the sub-state level in Wales. They note how each of the mainstream Christian denominations now have a board of social responsibility structure of some kind and have re-invigorated their efforts through these structures to overcome the 'the marginalization of religion into the private sphere' (Chambers and Thompson 2005a: 36). They remark that this can be seen in the way FBOs have advised the Assembly on the faith dimension of issues such as health and education (Chambers and Thompson 2005a: 43). Going beyond Christian denominations, some attention is given to the mobilisation of the Muslim Council of Wales in the early 2000s (Chambers and Thompson 2005b: 345, Chambers 2015: 217). Chambers and Thompson (2005a: 38) also make the argument that FBOs appear to be trying to set the agenda rather than directly influencing policy.

Likewise with respect to Northern Ireland, Ganiel (2008a: 111-113) notes the way in which a fundamentalist Christian FBO, the Caleb Foundation, has increased its political participation since 1998, attempting to influence education policy through a strategy of engaging with MLAs, the Northern Ireland Office, and the the Community Relations Council,

an organisation created by The Belfast Agreement. Ganiel (2008a: 116-118) argues that traditional evangelical organisations have consequently learnt the language of marginalisation and discrimination, and have used it to make their case and gain influence. More mainstream evangelical organisations have also engaged politically with the Assembly through their political liaison officers as well as through 'discrete relationships' with government ministers and a favourable relationship with the media (Ganiel 2008a : 123, 127-128). They also underline how evangelical FBOs have responded to the structures created by the Belfast Agreement in 1998 and use multiple routes for advocacy purposes.

To sum, these studies underline the way in which FBO engagement can be shaped by structures and levers associated with devolved institutions, such as the Faith Communities Forum in Wales, the electoral system in Scotland and equality legislation in Northern Ireland. However, the literature is not attempting to focus on how FBOs have engaged themselves in the sub-state political systems.

### 2.2.3 FBO Engagement with the devolved institutions at the sub-state level

The literature that focuses specifically on FBO engagement at the sub-state level post-devolution is far more detailed, and uses theoretical frames to analyse how FBOs have engaged politically since 1998/9. This literature is not vast and is limited in focusing largely on Scotland and representative FBOs and Christian FBOs.

Both Steven's (2003, 2007, 2011) work on the political influence of the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland and Gillan's (2008) work on family policy in post-devolution Scotland are the only studies in the literature which systematically analyse FBO engagement in one of the UK's devolved regions, utilising theoretical frames in order to examine the strategy and effectiveness of the FBOs in specific policy areas. Steven's works

(2003, 2007, 2011) seek to understand whether the Church of Scotland and Catholic Church are influential in post-devolution Scottish politics by studying policy areas such as Home Rule, sectarianism, the War on Terror, Section 28, human genetics, gambling and drinking and social care for the elderly (see Steven 2003: 40-71-96). Gillan's work (2008) comes from a different angle, as FBOs are studied amongst other pressure groups in an attempt to understand the different facets that influence the formation of family policy in Scotland. Because of this, Gillan (2008) utilises a range of theoretical frameworks such as pressure group theory in order to analyse group engagement and civil society theory in order to analyse the pressure groups within wider civil society in Scotland and public policy theory in order to analyse policy change. Steven's (2003) thesis focuses on the Church of Scotland's political engagement and includes a comparison with the Catholic Church. Gillan (2008) on the other hand studies the Christian Institute and the Catholic Church as the most active FBOs engaging with the Family Law Bill and the Scottish Sexual Health Strategy. Despite their different outcomes, both studies provide important pieces of the jigsaw for understanding FBO engagement at the sub-state level, discussing FBO structures, strategies and effectiveness.

Gillan's (2008) work therefore does not analyse the political advocacy structures of the groups under study and this is likely because the angle she takes focuses on policy outcomes rather than the FBOs themselves. However, Steven's work (2003, 2007, 2011) discusses the political advocacy structure of the Church of Scotland in greater detail than other works (e.g. Forrester 1993). He raises questions regarding the structures of representative FBOs and their flexibility for engaging politically at the sub-state level more widely. Steven (2003: 43) indicates that the Church has created a new committee for Holyrood, denoting the Church's eagerness to engage with the new institution on a par with

others. The study also introduces the political role of the Board of Social Responsibility and notes its engagement on traditional moral issues (Steven 2003: 72-96). The work's most important contribution regarding political advocacy structures is the discussion surrounding the role of the moderator. Examples signal that the Church's democratic structure which elects a moderator for one year leads to weak leadership, particularly because the Church and State committee and the Board of Social Responsibility might give a different line to the moderator (Steven 2003: 78-79, 118-119, 2007:105). The weak moderator is contrasted with the role of Cardinal and Archbishop in the Catholic Church which can build a profile over time and provide a consistent position on behalf of the Church (Steven 2003:118). However, while the political advocacy structure of the Church is discussed, a theoretical frame is not applied for understanding how it has adapted to the sub-state level.

Despite not using a theoretical frame for analysing the Church's structural adaptation, Steven's (2003) analysis of the Church's strategy is greatly strengthened by studying it through the lens of pressure group theory. A less detailed analysis of the Catholic Church's strategy is also presented. Utilising the insider/outsider distinction gives nuance to the author's analysis of strategy, enabling the work to indicate the various strategies used. They include a detailed discussion regarding the use of public pronouncements, giving evidence to Holyrood committees, and developing influential reports (Steven 2003: 40-96). Utilising the insider/outsider distinction enables Steven (2003, 2007) to generalise the strategies used so as to better understand the role of FBOs at the sub-state level. For instance, using the distinction, Steven (2003, 2007) recognises that the Church of Scotland's political engagement is divided between the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility which utilise insider and outsider

strategies depending on the policy area. While the Church and Nation committee's pronouncements are often outside of the mainstream of politics, the Board of Social Responsibility utilises its position as a service provider in order to gain access to debates on issues such as Section 28 and social care for the elderly (Steven 2003: 43). There is also reference to the Church working in coalition with other third sector organisations, but this is not analysed in a theoretical manner (Steven 2003: 51-57).

Gillan's (2008) analysis of FBO strategy is very detailed, shedding light on how FBOs engage with each step of the policy process. Gillan's (2008) use of both public policy theory and pressure group theory enables her to generalise the strategies utilised by the FBOs, rather than simply offer a description of their activities. For instance, by analysing FBO engagement at each stage of the legislation, Gillan (2008) is able to show how the Christian Institute and the Catholic Church balance a strategy which attempts to directly influence the legislation, while also working to frame the wider debate. By noting this dual strategy, Gillan (2008) offers a nuanced perspective on the short term and long term strategies FBOs employ. For instance, the main strategy discussed by Gillan (2008: 93-94) is the way in which the FBOs 're-frame' the agenda during the policy process, so that the discussion is in their favour. The author notes how the Christian Institute managed to frame discussions regarding marriage and divorce as a 'moral issue' in the consultative stage of the policy process (Gillan 2008: 93-94). This re-framing was then strengthened through persuading a sympathetic Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) to propose an amendment at the committee stage (2008:102). Gillan (2008: 123-125, 132-133) then notes how this influenced the debate in the Scottish Parliament. Likewise, with the Sexual Health Strategy, the Catholic Church succeeded in framing the debate as a moral issue through a proactive

and high profile media strategy (Gillan 2008: 167). The relationship between the Catholic Church and the Labour Party is also noted (Gillan 2008: 17). The author also points to the way in which devolution has brought the Catholic Church and evangelical groups to work together, leading them to surpass their sectarian history, for the purposes of influencing moral issues (Gillan 2008: 126-127, 212-213).

Pressure group theory also allows the authors to measure effectiveness and influence in a rigorous manner. Using typologies from the pressure group theory as a basis, Steven develops a measurement to understand whether the Church of Scotland is an effective pressure group. The measurement includes these questions:

1. Was the [Church of Scotland] fully consulted by the Scottish Executive, or relevant Government Department, in order to establish its opinion on the issue?
2. Did the [Church of Scotland] speak out in a consistent and clear way on the issue?
3. Did the [Church of Scotland] achieve its ultimate objectives concerning the issue?

(Steven 2003: 45).

This is an important contribution, because it allows Steven to develop a decisive measurement of whether a FBO's engagement is effective. This adds a dimension to the study of FBOs, as many of the pre-devolution studies and the post-devolution studies do not attempt to measure effectiveness (Lynch 1998, Davies 2008, Hughes 1999, Walker 2002, Watts 2007, Keating 2010) while the studies which do (Forrester 1993, McGrath 2000, Brewer et al 2013) provide a vague notion of effectiveness, which is not grounded in a

measurement which the reader can assess against the empirical evidence presented. Moreover, Steven (2003) also tackles the issue regarding the difficulty of measuring effectiveness, raised by Lynch (1998: 62). Instead of attempting to indicate a precise measurement of the Church's influence, Steven (2003: 7) provides a measurement of whether the Church of Scotland is equipped to act as an effective pressure group. This allows the author to offer a conclusion regarding the effectiveness of the Church of Scotland, without getting stuck in debates regarding causation.

Even so, Steven's (2003: 45) measurement has some limitations as it focuses on FBO activity but does not factor in the way in which the organisation is received by decision makers (government ministers, and civil servants etc). The thesis' analysis of the effectiveness of the Church of Scotland could also be more nuanced. While the Church has not influenced the wording of every Bill with which it then engaged with, it is not fair to expect it to do so in the pluralist and secular context in which it engages. The fact that the Church has influence in some areas, but does not in others, deserves a fairer hearing. In fairness, Steven (2007, 2011) does offer a more nuanced account of the Church of Scotland's effectiveness in his published article and book chapter. In his 2007 article on the post devolution engagement of the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland, he notes that the Church's decision to re-arrange its structure in 2005 has led to more 'co-ordinated' engagement, evidenced by the moderator speaking out much more forcibly on same sex adoption (Steven 2007: 104-105). Steven (2011: 101) also notes that the mutual benefit of the Church and political parties working together is recognised by politicians. Here, Steven (2007, 2011) takes a more nuanced stance, recognising that the Church's role isn't all powerful, but neither is it inconsequential in Scottish politics.



A nuanced approach towards effectiveness and influence is evident in Gillan's (2008) analysis of the Catholic Church and the Christian Institute's influence on family law in Scotland. Gillan's (2008) analysis goes further than Steven (2003) because she analyses both the strategies selected by the FBOs and the way decision makers perceive the FBOs. This more nuanced view comes from focusing to a greater extent on Maloney et al's (1994) insider/outsider distinction, which examines both the strategies of FBOs and the way they are received by decision makers.

Gillan's (2008) theoretical framework also allows her to present the bigger picture with regards to influence. Mackay et al's (2005: 10) continuum of influence which includes 'recognition of a legitimate voice, provoking reconsideration of the way others think, changes in the terms of public debate, and concrete changes in policy outcomes' as the range of ways one might identify influence is utilised. Using this continuum allows Gillan to go beyond an understanding of influence as directly pursuing, stopping or changing a policy position, to one that understands influence as a longer term strategy. The ability of FBOs to influence the climate in which debates are discussed is cited as an example. Gillan (2008: 282) notes that the influence of FBOs in Scotland is not always seen in changing the wording of bills, but in the longer term effects they may have on Scottish politics. This takes us back to Mitchell's (2011: 55) argument that FBOs influence the tone of the debate but not policy itself. Gillan (2008) notes that the two are not necessarily isolated from one another as this bigger picture is very important, indicating the necessity of going beyond a traditional understanding of influence, realising that policy is developed in a much wider context which FBOs and other organisations can shape over time. Steven's (2003: 45) measurement, together with a nuanced understanding of what might be understood as influence as

utilised by Gillan (2008), is an important contribution to analysing whether FBOs at the sub-state level are effective.

#### 2.2.4 The Limitations of the Literature

Despite Steven (2003, 2007, 2011) and Gillan's (2008) important contribution, the literature has its limitations. Firstly, the literature is limited to a study of a single case; Scotland. There is therefore a need for detailed attention to FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland, and to compare FBO engagement in more than one sub-state region in the UK. Secondly, the literature focuses on a limited range of FBOs. Between Steven (2003, 2007, 2011) and Gillan (2008), only the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Church of Scotland and the Christian Institute are analysed. Hence, while representative FBOs do receive reasonable attention in these studies, socio-political FBOs do not. The Christian Institute, examined by Gillan (2008) is quite a small socio-political FBO of a particular fundamentalist theological orientation and cannot necessarily be used to illustrate how socio-political FBOs engage in Scotland or in other sub-state political systems. Attention to both representative and socio-political FBO engagement at the sub-state level is lacking in order to illustrate as wide a picture of FBO engagement as possible, rather than simply one subdivision of the faith sector.

More broadly, the literature focuses on Christian FBOs alone, giving little attention to non-Christian FBOs. As noted previously, Chambers (2015) and Chambers and Thompson (2005a, 2005b, 2006) do point to non-Christian FBO engagement in Wales. The authors note the mobilisation of the Muslim Council of Wales (MCW) in the early 2000s (Chambers 2015: 217, Chambers and Thompson 2005b: 345) and the activity of the Hindu and Sikh community (Chambers 2015: 217, Chambers and Thompson 2005a: 35-36, 2005b: 345 and

2006: 222). Likewise, Whittaker (2015) discusses the MCW's engagement in his study of black and minority ethnic participation in Wales' 2011 referendum on primary law making powers, suggesting that its involvement indicates its eagerness to adopt a sense of a Welsh national identity by identifying with the devolved institutions. His findings also concur with Chambers and Thompson (2005a, 2005b, 2006), regarding the eagerness of the Muslim community to engage in Wales' sub-state political system, using the referendum as a way of positioning themselves in the political sphere (Whittaker 2015: 18). Whittaker (2015: 23) tentatively argues that the Muslim community has been accepted as a legitimate part of Welsh civil society, and their voices were utilised in the campaign. As regards the literature on Northern Ireland, Marranci's (2003, 2004, 2005 2006) anthropological studies of the Muslim community make some reference to its public profile but does not examine its political engagement. The only other study which focuses on FBO engagement in Northern Ireland is a study by Trotman (2007), commissioned by the Northern Ireland Executive's Department for Social Development. The report discusses the backgrounds of the FBOs, their civil society activity and their engagement with government. The main conclusion is that many of these organisations wish to engage politically, mainly in the area of education, but lack the capacity to do so, and access is limited (Trotman 2007: 27, 37, 52, 70).

While these studies offer some insight into non-Christian FBO engagement, it is not discussed in great detail. As noted before, Chambers (2015) and Chambers and Thompson (2005a, 2005b, 2006) are not attempting to understand how FBOs engage politically in Wales, so much as show that devolution has created the opportunity for engagement. Likewise, the purpose of Whittaker's article is to highlight how MCW's engagement with the 2011 referendum has shaped both Welsh society and the Muslim community in Wales. For

Northern Ireland the literature is quite descriptive, and its lack of theoretical grounding means the report lacks depth.

In sum, the chapter has to date critically analysed the literature on FBO engagement post devolution. First and foremost, it is evident that the literature in this area is limited, particularly when it comes to in-depth studies which utilise a theoretical framework to understand FBO engagement. Much of the literature is general and brief, but does offer some insight into the sub-state level. Furthermore, a number of studies underline how devolution has created an opportunity for FBOs to engage, re-engage and develop a new form of engagement at the sub-state level.

The literature that focuses directly on FBO engagement utilises pressure group theory. Steven (2003) and Gillan's (2008) use of this theoretical framework for understanding strategy and effectiveness leads to an in-depth and nuanced analysis of FBO engagement. While Steven's (2003: 45) measurement of effectiveness has its limitations, it is important in exemplifying how FBO effectiveness can be measured to gain a fuller picture of FBO engagement at the sub-state level. Utilising a measurement such as Steven's (2003: 45), together with a nuanced understanding of influence, as is used in Gillan's (2008) thesis, offers a rigorous way of analysing effectiveness. The chapter also noted limitations to the literature. The in-depth studies have only been conducted in the case of Scotland, emphasise representative FBOs, negating the study of socio-political FBOs, and only focus on Christian FBOs.

## **2.3 An evaluation of the theoretical frameworks used in the literature**

An assessment of the literature has drawn attention to a number of theoretical frameworks used to analyse FBO engagement at the sub-state level. This third section of the chapter evaluates the frameworks utilised in this literature, and in literature beyond the sub-state level, in order to establish the most powerful explanatory framework for studying FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland. A number of the studies utilise civil society theory and pressure group theory with fewer using social movement theory. Each of these theoretical frameworks will be discussed in turn in order to underline both their strengths and limitations. It is argued that while each of these has something to offer, pressure group theory is the most powerful explanatory framework for the study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level.

The literature makes some limited use of social movement theory as regards to theoretical frameworks for analysing FBO engagement at the sub-state and UK levels. Steven (2008: 188-193) utilises social movement theory to analyse the ‘improved opportunity structure’ created by devolving responsibility over social policy to Scotland in 1999 and as a result of a proportional electoral system. While Steven (2008: 189-190) does not greatly develop this theoretical framework, he underlines the possibility of understanding FBO mobilisation to try and influence the agenda of political parties so as to influence a political system. Likewise, Hunt’s (2003, 2011) study of what he refers to as the ‘Christian Right’ in the UK utilises social movement theory to indicate joint working between FBOs at the UK level to challenge the LGBT rights agenda (Hunt 2011: 311). Hunt’s work illustrates how these FBOs mobilise the support of fundamentalist Christians and the

resources which explain the partial success of these 'anti-gay lobbies' (Hunt 2003: 1.3). While social movement theory can explain how FBOs engage politically, its emphasis is on the way in which social mobilization occurs, rather than the FBO engagement itself.

A framework used to a greater extent in the literature is civil society theory. Brewer et al (2011) and Ganiel (2008a) use civil society theory to analyse how FBOs have engaged politically, in order to examine their role in conflict transformation in Northern Ireland. Likewise, Chambers and Thompson (2005a) analyse FBOs as civil society groups in order to understand the changing role of FBOs in Wales. Furthermore, on the UK level, O'Toole et al (2013) study Muslim civil society organisations' engagement with government, analysing Muslim presence, voice and impact in England. While conceptualising the FBO as civil society organisations presents a way of analysing FBO political engagement in these studies, it does not provide as strong a set of tools for analysing the strategies and effectiveness of FBOs in the way that pressure group theory does. Indeed, while Gillan (2008) utilises civil society theory in her study of the policy process in post-devolution Scotland, she turns to pressure group theory to analyse strategy and effectiveness. Pressure group theory gives Lynch (1998), Steven (2003) and Gillan (2008) the tools to go beyond a description of FBO activity, and allows them to analyse FBO engagement in a more nuanced fashion. Recognising how the Church utilises the insider and outsider strategy at different times allows Steven (2003) to develop a much more dynamic explanation of strategy and influence. It aids Steven (2003) to recognise the type of strategy the Church pursues, and present a typology on which he builds his measurement of effectiveness. Utilising Maloney et al's (1994) insider/outsider distinction, also enables Gillan (2008) to demonstrate that

pressure group theory can go beyond analysing the strategy pursued to also analysing the FBO's status in the eyes of decision makers.

Pressure group theory's explanatory value is also evident in studies of FBO engagement beyond the sub-state level. Steven (2010) extends his conceptualisation of the FBO as a pressure group to his research on FBO engagement with the EU institutions. He asserts that conceptualising FBOs as pressure groups departs from more traditional ways of studying religion and politics, such as church-state relations, voting behaviour and the role of Christianity within European values (Steven 2010: 177). Instead, pressure group theory serves as a way of researching how FBOs lobby and influence, like other pressure groups, rather than focusing on the more privileged relationship between Church and state or questions of religious identity and politics. In doing this, he displays the utility of the framework for studying FBO engagement in pluralistic and secularised societies where FBOs are no longer privileged as churches have moved from engaging as established churches to 'one interest group among many' (Steven 2010: 184). This further underlines its utility for studying FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. Similarly, Warner (see 2000: 5-9) uses pressure group theory in her analysis of how the Catholic Church attempts to influence politically across European states. Pressure group theory indicates how the Catholic Church utilises political parties in order to influence political systems. This points to another aspect of FBO engagement which pressure group theory can help in explaining.

Having assessed the theoretical frameworks evident in the literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level and beyond, it is evident that pressure group theory is the most powerful framework for understanding how FBOs engage with devolved political institutions. The framework provides pliable theoretical tools for studying FBO engagement

in liberal democratic societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, providing a direct focus on FBO engagement which is not merely descriptive, but offers a nuanced analysis of FBO strategy and status and presents a method by which to measure effectiveness.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has assessed the literature on FBO engagement both before and after power was devolved to the sub-state level in the UK in 1998/9. It has been argued that while the literature offers a number of important insights, it also has limitations. A large proportion of the literature does not provide in-depth analysis of FBO engagement, and does not utilise theoretical frames. Secondly, a number of the more detailed studies focus on the opportunities devolution creates for FBO engagement, rather than focusing on FBO engagement itself. Theoretically grounded, in-depth studies, of FBO engagement at the sub-state level post devolution focus solely on Scotland, with Wales and Northern Ireland understudied. The studies also fail to compare both representative and socio-political FBOs and focus on Christian FBOs, thus leaving non-Christian FBOs understudied. Consequently, there is a need for a theoretically grounded comparative study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level which includes the study of both representative, socio-political, Christian and non-Christian FBOs. Finally, a number of theoretical frameworks used for analysing FBO engagement were examined, with pressure group theory providing the strongest explanatory framework for studying FBOs at the sub-state level. In light of the findings of this chapter, the thesis now proceeds in the next chapter to critically assess pressure group theory as a theoretical framework for the purpose of analysing FBO engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland.



## **Chapter 3: The Theoretical Framework.**

### **Introduction**

Chapter 2's critical assessment of theoretical frameworks evident in the literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state, national and supra-national levels resulted in asserting that pressure group theory is the more appropriate theoretical framework for analysing how FBOs engage with the devolved institutions at the sub-state level. This chapter focuses on establishing pressure group theory as a theoretical framework for this thesis by identifying the necessary tools for analysing FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. The theory stands out as enabling a study to move beyond describing FBO engagement to providing an in-depth analysis of FBO strategy and a nuanced measurement of FBO effectiveness.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section justifies the use of the term 'pressure group' before defining it. Following this, an argument as to why the FBO, as defined in Chapter 1, should be conceptualised as a pressure group is presented. The second section critically assesses pressure group theory in order to build a theoretical framework which this thesis can use to empirically study how FBOs have engaged at the sub-state level in the UK. Three main strands of the theoretical literature are examined: political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness. As regards political advocacy structure, pressure group mobilisation, the make-up of the political advocacy structures and their adaptation are assessed. Following this is the discussion of strategy, particularly the insider/outsider distinction, leading to the conclusion that Maloney et al's (1994) version of the distinction is strongest. The theoretical literature regarding coalition formation is then

assessed, noting the different factors which lead to the use of coalition as a strategy. Finally, in examining pressure group effectiveness the chapter argues that while it is difficult to measure influence on policy, it is worth pursuing. The thesis incorporates Steven's (2003) measurement, which attempts to 'build a picture' of effectiveness. The third section of this chapter evaluates the theoretical framework as a mode of analysing FBO engagement at the sub-state level. It argues that each theoretical concept presented in section 2 is relevant for analysing FBOs in their specific context at the sub-state level.

### **3.1 The FBO as a Pressure Group**

#### **3.1.1 Justifying the use of the term Pressure Group**

There are contrasting positions within the literature as to whether 'pressure group' or 'interest group' best describes the organisations which attempt to influence government with scholars tending to use either term without lengthy justification for their choice. However, the term pressure group is a more appropriate term for understanding FBO political engagement. The term 'interest' suggests that the function of the group is simply to defend or promote a group's interest. This may be true of some organisations (see Halpin 2006: 924), but this is not the sole purpose of FBO engagement. As Stewart (1958: 25) notes, there are two main types of groups, the sectional group and the cause group. He argues that the sectional group defends the interests of its members, while the cause group promotes a particular cause (Stewart 1958: 25). The groups in the 'cause' category are based upon a specific concern, not strictly upon the interest of the group's membership or constituency (Stewart 1958: 25). FBOs are concerned with defending their own interests, but they also have a wider concern for society as a whole. This is often referred to by FBOs as their concern for the 'common good' (see Wallis 2013: 3-24). Truman's (1951: 33)

definition of 'interest group' defines groups as being based upon 'shared attitudes' which make certain claims upon other groups. This refers to a group's attitude towards its interests rather than a particular concern such as the environment or for society in its wider sense. His definition gives the impression that political engagement is about one group's interests over another rather than particular causes. In this context, 'interest group' does not satisfactorily incorporate cause groups, and hence a large number of FBOs within its meaning (Finer 1966: 3).

Truman (1951: 39) argues that the term 'pressure' simply defines a 'stage' of group activity rather than a definition of the group, and hence believes this to be the term's weakness, but it can also be perceived as a strength. Unlike 'interest group', 'pressure group' incorporates both sectional and cause groups because it denotes the mode of action being used by the group, rather than that which the group engages in or with. The term's commending characteristic is the way in which it indicates the ambition of both the sectional and cause groups and denotes the way in which the groups attempt to put pressure on government in order to promote its interest or cause. In light of this, the term 'pressure group' rather than 'interest group' will be utilised in the thesis.

### 3.1.2 Defining the Pressure Group

Now that the use of the term 'pressure group' has been justified, it is possible to define it. In brief, Grant (2000:14) defines the pressure group as:

an organization which seeks as one of its functions to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy, public policy representing a set of authoritative decisions taken by the executive, the legislature and the judiciary and by local government and the European Union.

Defining the term pressure group is difficult, but Grant's definition goes a long way to explaining what a pressure group is and does. The definition underlines a number of key aspects regarding the pressure group and each will be critically assessed in turn below.

Grant notes that a pressure group is an 'organisation' and hence signals that pressure groups are structured and formalised groups. Rush's (1990: 8) definition agrees with this assertion, arguing that an individual or an unorganised group of individuals cannot be regarded as a pressure group, but that it is vital that the group is structured and organised to apply pressure. Grant therefore disagrees with Alderman (1984: 21) who includes 'units' which exist within the democratic process whether they are organised or not. This definition is too broad, as it could include wealthy individuals who because of their status and power are able to gain access to government.

A related question is the extent to which a group must be organised if it is to be deemed a 'pressure group.' Grant (2000: 8) argues that a defined membership is one of the characteristics of these groups. It is however a little limiting to insist that all entities with the title 'pressure group' have defined memberships. Jordan and Richardson (1987: 15) are keen to stay clear of a membership based interpretation, arguing that there are pressure groups which represent constituencies within society which do not make up its membership. As noted previously, some groups do not attempt to represent their membership, but instead act in 'solidarity' with a group, issue or cause (Halpin 2006: 924). Grant (2000: 8) is right to argue that defined membership is a characteristic of many pressure groups, but it is important to keep in mind that while a pressure group is structured and formalised so as to be deemed an 'organisation', not every pressure group will have a defined membership.

Grant's (2000: 14) definition also draws attention to the notion that a group does not necessarily have the primary objective of influencing government in order to be regarded a pressure group. Indeed, he (Grant 2000: 15-17) notes that influencing the formulation of public policy can be just one of a group's functions. By doing this, Grant widens his definition to include groups which might only engage politically from time to time, but nevertheless will do so if they feel the need to influence political decisions. By defining the 'pressure group' in this way, it is possible to include groups such as the Automobile Association which offers a service to its customers, but also seeks to influence public policy when it is in its interest to do so (Grant 2000: 15-16). Likewise, many FBOs, particularly representative FBOs, engage politically in a secondary capacity and hence Grant's definition incorporates a wide range of FBOs. Grant (2000: 15-17) successfully makes space for both the 'primary' and 'secondary' pressure groups, which is quite unique to his definition.

Another important feature of Grant's definition is that the pressure group's objective is to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy. This corresponds with the definition offered by many pressure group theorists (Pross 1986, Jordan and Richardson 1987, Rush 1990, Grant 2000, Coxall 2001). Grant (2000: 7-8) is clear that he is most concerned with groups which seek to change public policy rather than groups which exert pressure within companies or social groups. Unlike scholars such as Mackenzie (1955: 137) and Stewart (1958: 1), Grant (2000: 14) contextualises the pressure group as part of the policy process. By doing this, Grant notes the objective and agenda of pressure groups. They do not simply attempt to influence public opinion but seek legislation for their interest or cause. Grant's use of the term 'public policy' allows the definition to refer to the breadth of

access points that exist for pressure groups to utilise, without extending the pressure group's objective to every public body. In contrast to Stewart (1958: 1), Grant notes that a pressure group seeks to influence not only the executive but also the legislature. He also recognises the judiciary, local government and the European Union as access points. However, it is important to note that Grant's use of the term 'public policy' is not simply referring to policy outcomes but refers to a group's ability to influence the 'authoritative decisions' made by the executive and the legislature.

By emphasising the pressure group's focus on public policy outcomes, Grant (2000: 10-12) distinguishes between pressure groups and other organisations such as social movements and political parties which engage in wider methods of political engagement. The objective of both social movements and pressure groups is to exert influence, but the type of influence pressure groups seek is only one part of the wider social movement's agenda. Social movements attempt to engage politically without engaging directly with public policy. Grant (2000: 10-11) notes for instance, that the feminist movement can vary from people simply reading feminist literature to feminist pressure groups which lobby government. Therefore, while engaging with public policy is a part of a social movement's engagement, it's not its whole sum. Likewise, Grant (2000: 12) argues that there is a clear distinction between a pressure group and a political party and this is supported within the public policy literature (Baggott 1995: 26, Coxall 2001: 3). The political party attempts to influence voters, public opinion and stands for office, while the emphasis within a pressure group's agenda is the policy process. Grant (2000: 13) also notes that a pressure group is not expected to have a view on every political position in the same way as a political party which hopes to form a government.

It is a harder task however to determine whether a think tank can be labelled as a pressure group. A think tank carries out research and hence at first glance does not appear to be a pressure group. If however the think tank uses research in order to influence politically, it can also operate as a pressure group. A think tank with a clear agenda for influencing public policy in a particular fashion, rather than simply informing policy makers, can be deemed a pressure group therefore. Grant's (2000:14) definition does not explicitly make reference to the fact that a pressure group is external to government, but he does not consider a government department to be a pressure group (2000: 12). Grant (2000: 12) does however include non-departmental bodies as pressure groups. However, the control a government is likely to have over these bodies means it is difficult to define it as a pressure group because it is unlikely to be able to criticise or put pressure on the organisation which funds and governs it, but it can act as a pressure group in influencing government.

### 3.1.3 Conceptualising the FBO as a Pressure Group

Chapter one defined the FBO and presented a case for studying representative and socio-political FBOs in this thesis. It illustrated that representative FBOs and socio-political FBOs have clear political roles of representation and mobilisation, and hence their behaviour corresponds with that which the central research question endeavours to understand. This section argues that the representative and socio-political FBO can and should be understood as a pressure group.

There are obvious overlaps between the pressure group characteristics in Grant's (2000: 14) definition of the pressure group and the representative and socio-political FBO. Firstly, one of the functions of both the socio-political FBO and the pressure group is to engage politically. Clarke (2008: 25) notes that the socio-political FBO is 'in pursuit of

broader political objectives'. The socio-political FBO therefore mirrors the pressure group's ambition 'to influence the implementation and formulation of public policy' (Grant 2000: 14). Secondly, an important characteristic of the socio-political FBO is that it is organised and that it mobilises 'social groups on the basis of faith identities' (Clarke 2008: 25). In the same way as a pressure group, the socio-political FBO is also organised and structured and often has a defined membership.

Similarly, the representative FBO, or Apex Body (Clarke 2008: 25-26), discussed in Chapter 1, can also be understood as a pressure group. These are hierarchically structured organisations which represent the faithful to other actors. The representative FBO 'governs the faithful and represents them through engagement with the state' (Clarke 2008: 25). This will often be done through a subsidiary group within the representative organisation (Clarke 2008: 26). The fact that these FBOs engage with the state mirrors pressure groups, which seek to engage with a wide range of political actors. In addition, these groups 'govern the faithful and represent them' (Clarke 2008: 25) and hence have a defined membership, which is also a key characteristic of many pressure groups.

Indeed, Grant's (2000: 16) work exemplifies the way in which representative FBOs can be understood as pressure groups in discussing the Church of England:

Its main purpose is that of a religious organization: to provide facilities, buildings and clergy for the worship and the administration of the sacrament in accordance with its doctrinal beliefs, and to propagate its interpretation of the Christian gospel. However, it acts both as a sectional pressure group in relation to its own particular interests and as a cause group on wider social issues.



We can see here that the Church of England is a representative FBO due to the fact that it is hierarchically structured, rules on doctrinal matters, governs the faithful and represents them through engagement with the state and other actors. The Church is also a pressure group because it attempts to influence public policy as one of its functions. Its main function is a religious organisation, but if it is in the Church's interest or concern, it will act as a secondary pressure group.

Both socio-political and representative FBOs are organised groups which, as one of their functions, seek to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy by influencing authoritative decisions made by the executive, the legislature and other decision makers. We can therefore argue, that the representative and socio-political FBOs are encapsulated in Grant's (2000: 14) definition of the pressure group.

## **3.2 A Critical Assessment of Pressure Group Theory**

Building on conceptualising the FBO as a pressure group, this section critically assesses the pressure group theory literature. It examines the literature regarding political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness in turn, as a basis for evaluating the utility of the main concepts within pressure group theory for the study of FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland in the final section.

### **3.2.1 Political Advocacy Structure**

The literature on the political advocacy structures of FBOs will be assessed in three sections. First, the literature on pressure group mobilisation will be examined. Following this, the components which make up the political advocacy structures discussed in the literature will

be assessed and finally how political advocacy structures adapt to engage with political institutions in different political arenas, such as the sub-state level, will be investigated.

### 3.2.1.1 Pressure Group Mobilisation

The literature discusses how political advocacy structures come about by discussing pressure group mobilisation to great length. This literature can be divided into three main strands; the role of the 'entrepreneur', the 'patron' and 'disturbances'. It will be argued that the entrepreneur and the patron appear to have greater explanatory value than disturbance theory, but that political disturbances also have a role to play in explaining pressure group mobilisation.

According to Salisbury, group mobilisation comes about in connection with the work of the 'entrepreneur' (organiser/leader): 'The entrepreneurs/organizers invest in capital to create a set of benefits which they offer to a market of potential customers at a price' (Salisbury 1969: 11). The entrepreneur will offer selective benefits to members and in exchange, will receive the benefits of being able to lead the pressure group (Salisbury 1969: 25-31). Salisbury (1969: 15-16) uses Clarke and Wilson's (1961) definition of incentives which includes material, solidary and purposive/expressive benefits. In doing this, Salisbury (1969: 16) indicates that individuals join pressure groups for ideological or 'expressive' as well as material gains.

Walker on the other hand argues that 'patrons' are key in explaining pressure group mobilisation because they supply the group's initial finances and ensure the long term survival of the group through funding (Walker 1983: 396-397, 400). Patrons can be corporations, government or churches, but are mainly individuals (Nownes and Neeley

1996: 130-131). Again, this theory explains how a wide range of pressure groups can be mobilised, and connects the concept of entrepreneur and patron together.

Another cause of pressure group formation, found in the work of Truman (1951: 52-108), is in the form of disturbances. Truman (1951: 59) theorised that a disturbance might change the equilibrium of a group with other elements of society and that this would lead to groups mobilising so that a new equilibrium might be reached. However, while he gives some examples of disturbances, he does not define the term and hence it is difficult to know which external factors might give rise to mobilisation (Berry 1978: 382). Truman's (1951) examples of external factors: business cycles, war and increased government activity, also give the impression that his theory is more relevant for understanding economic pressure groups (Berry 1978:382). Even so, Truman's (1951) theory should not be disregarded because Nownes and Neeley's (1996) empirical work has connected the role of the entrepreneur and disturbances by demonstrating that pressure group leaders can be spurred into action due to particular 'disturbances'. They also note the role of political disturbances in mobilising pressure groups, pointing to political events such as Watergate or Roe vs. Wade (Nownes and Neeley 1996: 135). In doing this they underline the importance of the entrepreneur, but also emphasise the role of disturbance theory.

To sum, the entrepreneur and the patron appear to have more explanatory values than disturbance theory. Even so, all three theories play a role in explaining the wide range of factors that can lead to pressure group mobilisation and hence should be kept in mind when studying this phenomenon.

### 3.2.1.2. The components that make-up the political advocacy structure

The literature also discusses the make-up of the political advocacy structure. Political advocacy structures were traditionally understood by distinguishing between the sectional/cause distinction which offers a way of understanding the different types of group membership (Grant 2000: 18-19). It was argued that the sectional group represents a section of society while the cause group represents a cause and has a membership which is supportive of the cause (Stewart 1958: 25). However, while the distinction does to a certain degree offer an explanation of pressure group membership and aims, it does not offer a clear picture of different political advocacy structures. It does not explain the way in which group membership, activism, staff and democratic mechanisms relate to produce a pressure group's political advocacy structure.

It is possible however to come to an understanding of the different ways in which pressure groups are structured for the purposes of advocacy from the perspective of the literature. It does not offer an explicit typology of the different political advocacy structures, but it offers an insight into the factors that makeup a pressure group's political advocacy structure. These factors include whether an organisation's political advocacy structure is elite driven or democratic, staff or voluntary based and whether, and how, the organisation's political advocacy structure is located across different political arenas. Each of these factors is discussed in turn.

#### 3.2.1.2.1 The Elite Driven / Democratically Driven political advocacy structure

The literature indicates that pressure groups have differing levels of elite and democratic decision making within their political advocacy structures. Some groups 'favour decentralised, informal networks rather than corporate, top-down structures' (Coxall 2001:

143) and hence allow their members an extensive role in decision making. This is illustrated in groups such as Friends of the Earth which encourage local groups to undertake 'environmental initiatives' of their own (Coxall 2001: 143). In doing this, Friends of the Earth encourages local activism, without its staff members dictating an agenda to its members (Coxall 2001: 143). Groups with this political advocacy structure often favour activism and democratic participation for ideological reasons (Coxall 2001: 143). At the other end of the scale, pressure groups can be entirely elite-run with no role for the membership in the decision making process. This is a trend whereby the decision making structure of pressure groups have 'supporters' rather than members (Jordan and Maloney 2007:33-34). Here, supporters contribute to the pressure group financially, but do not shape the group's agenda or take part in group activism. Jordan and Maloney (1997: 190) term this the 'protest business'. It was traditionally argued that cause groups were less likely to rely on this type of model, utilising membership activism instead (Grant 2000: 18). However, this no longer seems to be the case, with cause groups using this model as much as sectional groups (Maloney and Jordan 1997:188, Jordan and Maloney 2007:12). For instance, Greenpeace has a 'small core of frontline troops' with 'a fee paying mass of non-participant supporters' (Coxall 2001: 143, Grant 2014: 15).

Finally, some pressure groups are located midway, with their political advocacy structures providing a partial decision-making role for members. Here, the pressure group takes the position of its members into account and then represents the membership to decision makers. For instance, Halpin (2006: 929-930) gives the example of the National Farmers' Union of Scotland which engages with government civil servants on agricultural policy, but only lobbies on positions that its membership support and which have been

endorsed through democratic means. These groups may use the democratic function within their political advocacy structure to signal to government that the organisation is representative. Some democratic mechanisms may be used in order for the pressure group leadership to ensure that its agenda is endorsed, rather than shaped by the membership (Jordan and Maloney 2007: 32). In this case, the group attempts to create and organise as large a membership or network of supporters as possible so as to signal representativeness. The pressure group literature argues that this is more likely to be done by sectional groups which represent a certain section of society rather than a cause group which engages on a particular issue (Coxall 2001: 146-147). However, the rationale for this is not clear. A cause group could allow some level of democratic participation from its members while entrusting the advocacy work to its staff.

#### 3.2.1.2.2 Staff Based / Voluntary Based political advocacy structure

Another important aspect of the political advocacy structure discussed in the literature is whether organisations utilise volunteers in their political engagement, or utilise a staff based political advocacy structure. Some pressure groups have a political advocacy structure which empowers the membership. In order to achieve this, many groups seek out an active membership rather than a mass membership (Coxall 2001: 147). Where member activism can be utilised as a resource, such resources can be used in a number of different ways from writing letters to decision makers, to demonstrating and leafleting and by engaging in direct action (Coxall 2001: 147). Membership participation can also enrich group activity through offering specialist skills, local knowledge and particular expertise (Coxall 2001: 147). Coxall (2001: 143) argues that while this political advocacy structure can often lead to 'disorganisation', it also ensures that members' energies are unleashed on behalf of the

issue at hand. If a pressure group does not utilise membership in its activism it is likely to place greater importance upon leadership and professional staff within its political advocacy structure. In this context, the staff will have a greater level of control over the organisation's agenda (Jordan and Maloney 2007: 175). According to Grant (2014: 15), pressure groups are utilising professional staff members over volunteer activism more and more. Diani and Donati (1999) also note, in the case of environmental pressure groups, that groups move away from the voluntary activist based political advocacy structure to the professional staff based political advocacy structure over time.

#### 3.2.1.2.3 Centralised / Devolved political advocacy structure

The final factor regarding the make-up of political advocacy structures of pressure groups discussed in the literature is how a pressure group's political advocacy structure is located across different political arenas. The multi-level governance literature asserts that pressure groups will adapt their political advocacy structures in order to engage in a range of arenas. This is evidenced in the way that pressure groups have extended their political advocacy beyond the domestic sphere in response to European integration (Eising 2004: 224). Pressure groups which are well established and which have large internal resources are able to choose different access points easily (Coen 2007: 337) as they 'venue shop' between the different levels of governance, looking for the access point where they will receive the most favourable hearing (Baumgartner and Jones 1993: 35). If a pressure group is dissatisfied with the way in which its issue has been received on the domestic level, it can seek a hearing on the European level or vice versa (as discussed by Princen and Kerremans 2008: 1138). Some groups simply engage at the domestic level, other groups only engage at the European level, while multi-level groups engage at both (Eising 2004: 225).

The literature also notes that pressure groups adapt to the sub-state level, leading to a range of organisations engaging in this political arena. While the next sub-section will assess how this adaptation comes about, the extent to which a pressure group's political advocacy structure is wholly autonomous at the sub-state level, the central level or is divided between arenas is discussed here. Keating et al (2009) categorise four main types of pressure groups at the sub-state level in the UK. These include 'purely territorial organisations' which are located at the sub-state level and have full autonomy over their political engagement. Then there are territorial organisations with an affiliation to UK/British groups. These groups are autonomous in their political engagement at the sub-state level, but have some affiliation to a group at the central level. Then there are territorial branches of UK/British organisations. In this context, the pressure group is already engaging at the national level, but sets up a branch office at the sub-state level, devolving autonomy from the centre to the region. Finally, there are purely British/UK groups which are wholly based at the national level, but still engage at the sub-state level in some capacity

Keating et al's (2009) categorisation is insightful, but it is important to remember that political advocacy structures may be more flexible than the categorisation suggests. Some organisations may only have autonomy to engage with devolved issues, or only some devolved issues, while other organisations might be affiliated to an organisation at the central level while taking a distinct position on devolved and non-devolved issues. Likewise, it may have only one member of staff based at the sub-state level, creating only a partial territorial branch. Furthermore, some UK organisations may second staff to the sub-state level for a period of time to work on a particular piece of legislation, with the member of



staff returning to the central level once the legislation has been withdrawn or enacted. Even so, Keating et al's (2009) categorisation provides a useful template for understanding an important component of the political advocacy structures of pressure groups.

The discussion above outlines the range of factors which make up the political advocacy structures of pressure groups. Key issues which derive from the above discussion include whether pressure groups have democratic or elite led political advocacy structures, whether the pressure group's political advocacy is staff or voluntary based and whether the pressure group's autonomy is at the sub-state level, the central level or is divided across these arenas.

### 3.2.1.3 Rescaling interest representation

The pressure group theory literature also discusses how groups adapt their political advocacy structures to engage in different political arenas. For instance, pressure groups can adapt structurally to the sub-state level, and in some circumstances, to echo Nownes and Neeley (1996), the devolution of power from the centre to the sub-state level could be the 'disturbance' which leads to this adaptation. Keating (2013: 118) notes that this can lead to several possible outcomes. Either pressure groups do not adapt structurally and their interest articulation and mediation remain at the national level, or 'institutional isomorphism' happens, by which the pressure groups 'assume the same territorial form as government, with their internal division of responsibilities matching it'.

Keating (2013: 119) also underlines a number of forces which drive adaptation. These include institutional drivers, whereby a strong regional government with broad regulatory, policy and spending powers 'define the relevant territory in a more constraining way, enclosing it strongly and inducing groups to follow suit'. It is likely that these factors

will affect most pressure groups, as the more powerful a sub-state government becomes, the less the pressure group will feel the need to venue shop in other arenas. It might also indicate that a pressure group will adapt to the sub-state level to a greater extent the stronger a sub-state government becomes over time. Keating's (2013: 119) second driver of adaptation is economic, noting that strong economic regions are likely to attract pressure groups to the region. Keating's (2013: 119-120) third driver is 'identitarian' factors, whereby members of the groups 'have an affective attachment to the region and the groups have decentralist tradition and philosophy'. Keating (2013: 120) also notes that pressure groups which do not have this type of connection to the sub-state level might have to respect the territorial level if the government associates itself with a territorial identity. It is likely that cause groups may find themselves particularly susceptible to identity factors, with pressure groups with more nationalist roots finding themselves drawn more naturally towards the region than groups which have political leanings more in line with the centre. The final driver is party political, as pressure groups may shift arenas in order to engage with a more favourable government. However, Keating (2013: 120) also suggests that 'path dependency' could also play a role, with some groups' adaptation influenced by their local or central origins.

This analysis provides a clear framework for understanding pressure group adaptation, but it is important to remember that the process of pressure groups adapting to a disturbance such as political devolution is not wholly predictable. Some pressure groups might adapt immediately, but structural change will come about over time for other organisations. Keating et al's (2009) work indicates that many pressure groups will adapt structurally in response to devolution, while others will not. It is also important to bear in

mind that this adaptation can manifest itself in many forms, with some pressure groups taking longer than others to adapt their structures. Territorial pressure groups will not change their structure so much as their capacity in response to the devolution of power. A territorial organisation, already located at the sub-state level could increase its capacity to engage by creating new structures and committees and/or appointing members of staff or mobilise greater support at the sub-state level in response to political devolution. Keating's (2013) drivers of adaptation further underscore the variety of reasons for this adaptation, which further indicates the many varied forms of adaptation.

### 3.2.2 Strategy

This section assesses pressure group strategy. This includes an analysis of the insider/outsider distinction and the literature regarding coalition formation.

#### 3.2.2.1 The insider/outsider distinction

It was traditionally argued that the sectional/cause distinction could explain pressure group strategy. Finer (see Grant 1978: 1) argued that as a rule, sectional groups would first contact the executive, then the legislature, then political parties and finally public opinion while the cause group's strategy would be the opposite. Some scholars argue that cause groups are more likely to rely on outsider strategies (Walker 1991: 117-119, Binderkrantz 2005: 711), but this cannot be regarded a firm rule. For instance, a cause group such as Greenpeace is often consulted by government, but does not shy away from influencing public opinion through protest (Grant 2000: 31).

Because of Grant's (1978: 1) dissatisfaction with the sectional/cause distinction's ability to explain pressure group behaviour, he developed the insider/outsider distinction. The distinction has become widely used, but has also been criticised and enhanced. This

section shows that the insider/outsider distinction effectively explains how pressure groups behave, with some pressure groups utilising a more direct strategy, with others taking a more indirect strategy. However, it will be argued that Grant's (1978: 4-7) original distinction is too binary a categorisation and that Maloney et al's (1994: 30) development of the distinction offers a more nuanced explanation of pressure group behaviour.

According to Grant (2000: 19), insider groups are regarded as legitimate by government and are consulted on a regular basis while outsider groups either do not wish to be involved in government consultation or are unable to gain official recognition. Grant's (1978: 4-7) typology of insider and outsider groups is broken down into sub-categories which explain the different ways in which groups engage as insiders and outsiders:

Figure 4: Grant's (1978) insider/outsider distinction

Insider	Outsider
Prisoner insiders	Potential Insiders
High Profile insiders	Outsider by necessity
Low Profile insiders	Outsider by ideology

(Grant 1978:4-7)

Grant (1995: 20) notes that a group might be a prisoner insider due to the fact that it is funded by government and hence cannot legitimately challenge it. Grant's (1978: 4) 'low profile' insider consults government and works behind the scenes while the 'high profile' insider might cultivate public opinion to supplement their engagement with the executive. The outsider category breaks down into the 'potential insider', 'outsider by necessity' and the 'outsider by ideology'. This distinction outlines the different strategies which pressure groups might adopt as well as the government-group relationship.

The insider/outsider distinction offers an insight into group strategy, but it also has its limitations. The main criticism of the distinction has been initiated by Maloney et al (1994: 30) who argue that it is a confusing typology because it conflates the strategy which the group chooses with the status it receives from decision makers. Maloney et al (1994: 28) argue that being a 'prisoner group' is not a choice of strategy but instead is a status that

may be bestowed upon it. The 'high' and 'low profile' category on the other hand is suggestive of a choice of strategy. The groups choose either a behind the scenes strategy or a more public role to complement engagement with government (Maloney et al 1994: 28). Maloney et al (1994: 30) have asserted the need to separate strategy from status and have developed a typology which achieves this. It includes the 'insider group', the 'outsider group' and the 'threshold group'. Including the threshold group<sup>3</sup> recognises the way that some groups oscillate between both the insider and outsider strategies (Maloney et al 1994: 28).

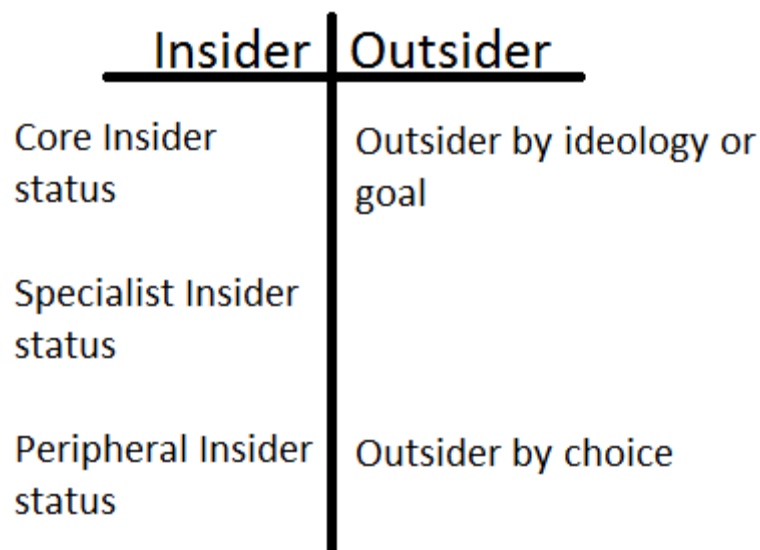
The threshold category is important as further empirical research (Binderkrantz 2005: 704) has shown that groups often compliment insider strategies with responsible outsider strategies by 'navigating between direct interaction with decision makers and indirect methods like media campaigns and member mobilisation' (Binderkrantz 2005: 711). For instance, an organisation might utilise an outsider strategy so as to 'place an issue on the agenda' (Binderkrantz 2005: 703). Groups may combine strategies, using outsider strategies, and simultaneously approach decision makers directly (Binderkrantz 2005: 703). For instance, organisations might utilise an outsider strategy through the media in highly politicised policy areas (Binderkrantz 2005: 706-707). There is also evidence that different strategies are used at different times in different political arenas (Dudley and Richardson 1998: 746-747).

Maloney et al (1994: 30) have elaborated a separate typology for group status which recognises the role of government in offering access to pressure groups:

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<sup>3</sup> The concept of the 'threshold group' was first developed by May and Nugent (1982).

Figure 5: Maloney et al's (1994) insider/outsider distinction



(Maloney et al 1994: 30)

The typology includes the 'core insider' and 'specialist insider' which have a privileged relationship with government, and the 'peripheral insider'. It is unclear as to exactly the difference between the core and specialist insider status, however it would appear that it is to do with whether a group is given insider status in a more specialised area of policy (specialist) or in wider policy areas (core) (Maloney et al 1994: 30-32). Nevertheless, they are both privileged in comparison to the 'peripheral insider' which has insider status but in reality is only engaged in 'cosmetic consultation' (Maloney et al 1994: 32). This development is important, because it overcomes the accusation of scholars such as Page (1999: 210), that the insider/outsider distinction lacks explanatory power because the majority of groups utilise an insider strategy. Maloney et al's (1994: 30) distinction outlines that while this might be the case, individual insider groups are perceived differently by decision makers, and hence the distinction, which includes status as well as strategy, has the ability to show that the way in which pressure groups are received by government

influences their behaviour. The outsider typology includes outsider groups by 'goal or ideology' which cannot be offered insider status because its issue is incompatible with the decision makers' ideology, and the outsider by 'choice' which fundamentally disagrees with government-group insider relationships.

As noted by the work of Gillan (2008) discussed in Chapter 2, utilising a typology that distinguishes between strategy and status enriches an understanding of group engagement by offering a wider view of the policy process. Such a typology highlights the strategy that groups pursue as well as the role that the government plays by offering privileged access and status to certain groups and denying it to others. According to Maloney et al (1994: 29), a group receives specialist or core insider status if it possesses resources decision makers desire. According to Maloney et al (1994: 36), the group-government relationship is 'exchange based'. Binderkrantz concurs with this and distinguishes between internal resources and 'specific resources' desired by decision makers. She notes: 'General resources such as members, financial resources and staff are important, but in addition, some groups control more specific resources valued by decision makers' such as 'specialized knowledge of value' (2005: 697). Maloney et al (1994: 29) give more detail on the role of resources, noting that 'economic power, knowledge (normally technical expertise), representative base, implementation power, compliance power' are important in the exchange based relationship. Organisations must also be able to bargain with decision makers and hence must be prepared for a level of compromise (Maloney et al 1994: 37). By taking Maloney et al's (1994: 30) distinction into account, a clearer picture of pressure group engagement with government is presented which provides a stronger basis on which to analyse the realities of pressure group politics.



### 3.2.2.2 Coalition Formation

The insider/outsider distinction explains the type of strategy a group engages in and the way it is received by decision makers. How pressure groups build coalitions and utilise them as part of these wider strategies is now investigated. Some scholars argue that it is in a pressure group's interests to work alone (Browne 1990), but many groups choose coalition as a strategy. Some coalitions are made up of similar groups while 'strange bedfellow' coalitions bring groups together, which would otherwise be at odds (Scholzman and Tierney 1986: 49). This section analyses the main factors which lead to coalition formation.

Coalitions are not without their financial costs, but they allow pressure groups to share internal resources (Mahoney 2007: 368) and can be particularly valuable for organisations looking for a 'low cost' strategy (Mahoney and Baumgartner 2004: 2). Furthermore, Whitford (2003:45) notes that coalitions are a good opportunity for minority interests to 'build more powerful blocks'. Even so, Mahoney's (2007: 378-379) empirical research on the USA and EU political systems has found that resource rich groups are more likely than resource poor organisations to form coalitions. Hula notes that the incentives can be both financial and purposive (1999: 23). A pressure group might join a coalition because it believes it can lead to a desired policy outcome (Hula 1999: 25-26). Other factors include information sharing (Pijenburg 1998: 306-307) and a group without core or specialist insider status benefitting from an organisation with a more favourable status (Pijenburg 1998: 310 and Mahoney 2007: 369). Empirical research suggests that pressure groups are more likely to join coalitions if powerful pressure groups are already members (Hojnacki 1997: 83).

Other scholars argue that 'issue-context' is the driving factor in coalition building. Because some scholars have argued that groups are likely to pursue issue 'niches' which allow them to differentiate themselves from other groups (Browne 1990: 491), the argument has followed that pressure groups are likely to choose coalition as a strategy in 'instances where there is a greater need than usual to signal to leaders the breadth of support for a position and a greater need to pool resources' (Mahoney 2007: 370). This has led scholars to argue that both issue saliency and opposition to an issue can lead to coalition building. However, the literature suggests that context is important, with some scholars finding opposition as a key factor leading to coalition building, with others finding little correlation in this area. Both Mahoney and Baumgartner's (2004: 18) study of pressure groups in Washington and Mahoney's (2007: 381) study of groups in the US and the EU have argued that pressure groups tend to form coalitions on salient issues. The question of whether strong opposition to a cause leads to coalition building is more contested however. Mahoney's (2007: 378) study of pressure groups in the US and the EU finds that issue conflict leads to coalition building, and Heinz et al (1993: 358) find that the degree of conflict and stability and the use of coalitions are positively related. However, Webster's (2000: 18) study of environmental pressure groups in the EU and Mahoney and Baumgartner's (2004: 17-18) study of Washington pressure groups do not find a correlation. Therefore, the empirical evidence indicates that a strong opposition can in some contexts lead to coalition building, but does not in other contexts. As a result of this, it is important to examine the role of conflict when examining the causes of coalition in different contexts without assuming that it drives or reduces coalition activity. Issue saliency appears to lead to coalition, but the jury is out on the influence of conflict and opposition.

As noted above, the context in which pressure groups engage can influence whether they build coalitions. Therefore, it is likely that institutional factors also play a role in the creation of this context. Mahoney (2007: 368) states that the legislatures and executives which pressure groups are attempting to influence can have an effect on the group's likelihood to form a coalition. Mahoney (2007: 375-77) argues that pressure groups are more likely to form coalitions when lobbying in Washington than the European Commission because decision makers in Washington are careful to ensure that policy decisions do not lead to a loss of votes. However, Webster's (2000: 9) research on environmental pressure groups in the EU suggests that closed institutions, like the Commission, can indirectly encourage pressure groups to form coalitions, as the lack of transparency in the Commission 'stimulated' the groups to begin talking to one another (Webster 2000: 19). It is not possible to create a firm rule therefore, but there seems to be evidence that institutions can shape coalition formation. It is important to assess the role of institutional factors in different contexts, and to be aware that both representative and non-representative contexts are both ripe for coalition formation.

Overall, there is a larger consensus in the literature regarding the role of organisational influences and saliency in leading to coalition formation. As regards to the role of conflict and opposition, there is less consensus. It is likely that opposition to an issue and the type of institution a pressure group is engaging with also leads to coalition building in some contexts. In light of these findings, each factor is worthy of investigation in an empirical study of pressure group strategy.

### 3.2.3 Effectiveness.

Building on the discussion of the political advocacy structure and strategy of pressure groups, this section assesses the extent to which pressure group theory can offer a way of analysing pressure group effectiveness. Both Whiteley and Winyard (1987: 114) and Grant (2000: 195) offer typologies that attempt to understand pressure group effectiveness. Whiteley and Winyard's (1987: 125-131) typology is based upon what pressure group respondents and civil servants, interviewed by the authors, believe make a pressure group effective (1987: 111). The typology is split into three sections, and includes the environment in which the group engages, group strategy and group resources.<sup>4</sup> Grant's (2000: 195-206) typology includes resources,<sup>5</sup> external factors and the 'proximate environment of groups and the domains they seek to organise'. Likewise, Rose (1974: 254-255) notes the role of cultural values, arguing that a pressure group's agenda which coincides with the 'cultural norms' of society is much more likely to be effective. These factors are important to understanding effectiveness, but the typologies do not present a framework for measuring effectiveness.

However, Steven (2003) goes a step further and develops a measurement by which this picture can be built. As noted in Chapter 2, Steven (2003: 45) measures effectiveness by asking whether the group was consulted by government, whether the group spoke out consistently and clearly on the issue and whether the group achieved its ultimate objective concerning the issue. Steven (2003: 7) is careful to note that he is not attempting to measure 'political influence precisely', as much as present an 'overall picture' of a pressure

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<sup>4</sup> Whiteley and Winyard (1987: 131-135) note that the use of the term resources is not referring to financial resources but membership, attractiveness of the cause, research capabilities and information, ability to co-operate.

<sup>5</sup> This includes a combination of internal resources such as financial, staffing and membership as well as sanctioning capability and choices of strategy.

group's effectiveness. This is an important contribution, because it provides a way of decisively measuring pressure group effectiveness, allowing for a more in-depth study.

As noted in Chapter 2, despite being an important contribution, the measurement is not without its weaknesses. Firstly, it only evaluates strategy, without assessing whether the political advocacy structure is appropriate for the political system in which the pressure group engages. Secondly, it is unclear to what extent an objective must be met in order to be a success. Thirdly, Steven's (2003: 45) measurement also fails to take into account the way in which decision makers receive pressure groups. The importance of distinguishing between the strategy which a pressure group selects and the status that is conferred upon it was discussed previously in the chapter in light of Maloney et al's (1994) research. It is important that this is reflected not only in an analysis of strategy, but also when analysing effectiveness. Including both sides in a measurement of effectiveness can greatly enrich the picture being built.

As noted in Chapter 2, in addition to examining the strategy pursued and the status bestowed on the pressure group by decision makers, it is also important that the measurement incorporates a nuanced understanding of influence. On this basis, any question regarding a group's 'outcome' can be answered in a broad sense. There is a consensus within the literature that a precise measurement of influence is difficult, but it is still important to have a nuanced understanding of influence when attempting to apply a measurement of effectiveness to pressure group engagement. As discussed in Chapter 2, a continuum of influence, such as Mackay et al's (2005: 10) identifies influence as 'recognition of a legitimate voice, provoking reconsideration of the way others think, changes in the terms of public debate, and concrete changes in policy outcomes'. Keeping in mind this

broad understanding of influence can aid in ensuring a nuanced reading of pressure group effectiveness when applying a measurement of the effectiveness of their engagement. Likewise, a pressure group might not always succeed in opposing a bill in its entirety, but might succeed in influencing part of a bill. Consequently, this may not be the initial desired outcome, but it does not mean the pressure group should be regarded as ineffectual in its engagement.

In summary, Steven's measurement of effectiveness provides a framework for analysing FBO effectiveness, which attempts to present a picture of effectiveness rather than directly measuring influence. While it has its weaknesses, a developed measurement could offer a suitable way in which to analyse FBO effectiveness.

### **3.3: Utilising the theoretical tools for the study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK**

Now that the pressure group theory literature has been critically assessed, this final section discusses the utility of the theoretical tools analysed in section 2 for examining FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland. In doing this, the section draws together the tools to be utilised for the empirical study in Chapters 5 and 6.

The theory of pressure group mobilisation is important for the study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland. While many scholars argue that Truman's disturbance theory has less explanatory value than Salisbury's (1969) theory of the 'entrepreneur' and Walker's (1983) theory of the 'patron' it could have some explanatory value in the context of FBOs at the sub-state level in the UK. Devolution may have had the impact of a 'political disturbance', with FBOs mobilising in response to it. The

literature discussed in Chapter 2 intimated that organisations such as the MCW, and other non-Christian FBOs, only mobilised after 1999 (see Chambers and Thompson 2005b: 345, Chambers 2015: 217). The ‘political disturbance’ could therefore be significant to a full understanding. Likewise, the importance of leaders and elders within faith communities (Dinham 2009: 180-181) could mean the concept of the ‘entrepreneur’ is also valuable for the study of FBO mobilisation.

The different components which shape the political advocacy structures of pressure groups are also significant for understanding the political advocacy structures adopted by FBOs for engaging with the devolved political institutions in Wales and Northern Ireland. Keating et al’s (2009) categorisation of how autonomy within the political advocacy structures of pressure groups can be located across different political arenas could be particularly salient for this political context. Utilising Keating et al’s (2009) categorisation of pressure groups at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland enables the thesis to identify where the FBO’s autonomy lies, providing a fuller picture of the FBO’s political advocacy structure. However, an important element which is missing from Keating et al’s (2009) categorisation, which must be evaluated in this thesis, is that not all organisations in Northern Ireland necessarily look to the UK as the central state level, but might instead look to the Republic of Ireland in this respect. For instance, Keating et al (2009: 11) refer to trade unions being divided between ‘UK and all-Ireland bodies’ and hence it is important that Ireland is included alongside the UK/Britain as a central state/national level.

Keating’s (2013) theory of rescaling interest representation is also particularly useful in the case of Wales and Northern Ireland. Both the explanation of how FBOs adapt, and the drivers which lead to their adaptation, are useful tools for understanding whether FBOs

have adapted their political advocacy structures to engage with the devolved political institutions, or whether they have remained at the central level. However, it is important to remember that many FBOs at the sub-state level were territorially based prior to political devolution in 1998/9, and will not have adapted their structures from the central level in response to devolution. For instance, the literature on FBO engagement pre 1998/9 noted that a number of FBOs in Wales and Northern Ireland were active in the region (Hughes 1999, McGrath 2000, Davies 2008, Mitchell 2011, Brewer et al 2011). Territorial organisations will not experience structural adaptation in the same way as organisations devolving autonomy from the central state to the sub-state level, but it is possible that they may increase their staff capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions. This change in capacity could be as fundamental as the concept of ‘institutional isomorphism’, whereby pressure groups adapt their political advocacy structures so as to engage with the devolved institutions, in demonstrating how pressure groups adapt to the sub-state level, and are therefore significant theoretical concepts for this research. This also underlines how important it is to remember that Wales and Northern Ireland have their own experience of devolution prior to the establishment of the devolved assemblies when examining how the political advocacy structures of FBOs have adapted since 1998/9.

The insider/outsider distinction also has utility for analysing FBO strategy at the sub-state level. Maloney’s (1994) insider/outsider distinction is potentially more suitable for analysing FBO strategy at the sub-state level than Grant’s (2000) distinction. Page (1999: 210) has argued that a large number of organisations in the UK receive insider status, and we might expect the level of insider access to be even wider in Wales and Northern Ireland due to the specific context of devolution to the regions. As noted in Chapter 1, the devolved



political systems were designed to be open and transparent, encouraging the engagement of third sector organisations (see McAllister 2000, Chaney and Fevre 2001, McEvoy 2006a, Cairney and McGarvey 2013: 11-12). Furthermore, Cairney (2008: 361) has noted an open, 'Welsh way' of consultation while Chaney (2011: 263-264, 268) has referred to the apparent emphasis on partnership working and consultation in both Wales and Northern Ireland. A theoretical tool which provides a way of distinguishing between different types of insiders is therefore important. Maloney et al's (1994) distinction provides the tools which allow this research to dissect the different types of insiders, and to distinguish between insiders on the periphery, and those with real access to decision makers and policy decisions. In this respect, Maloney et al (1994) present an appropriate framework for analysing FBO strategy, which is potentially well suited for the study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland.

The theoretical literature also presents a way in which coalitions can be analysed and the role of FBOs within these coalitions can be explained. This is important for this thesis in light of the examples of FBOs working together noted in the literature review (McGrath 2000, Brewer et al 2011) prior to 1998/9. Similarly, utilising a developed version of Steven's (2003) measurement of effectiveness, with MacKay et al's continuum of influence, will also allow this study to go beyond the literature that currently exist on Wales and Northern Ireland, providing a more in-depth study of FBO effectiveness. In summary, each of the tools analysed in section 2 provide a way of studying FBO engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland, with each utilised in Chapters 5 and 6.

## Conclusion

This chapter has justified and defined the use of the term pressure group and has presented a case as to why FBOs should be conceptualised as pressure groups in this thesis. The chapter also critically assessed pressure group theory and examined its utility as a theoretical framework for researching FBO engagement at the sub-state level. It argues that each of the theoretical concepts discussed in section 2 are relevant for this thesis' study. As a theoretical framework for the thesis has been established, the next chapter presents the thesis' research design and methodology.

## **Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Chapter 2 drew attention to the lack of detailed study of Wales and Northern Ireland in the literature on faith-based organisation (FBO) engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. This drew attention to the potential to develop an in-depth comparative study of FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland. Drawing on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3, this chapter outlines the research design of the thesis and the methodology used to carry out the empirical research in Wales and Northern Ireland discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 of the thesis. First, the secondary research questions are presented. Secondly, the dependent and independent variables derived from the theoretical framework are used to develop testable hypotheses. Following this, the chapter justifies two case studies, Wales and Northern Ireland and outlines the selection of FBOs examined in detail in each case. The second section presents the case study strategy, including the policy areas selected for study and the method of data collection and analysis. The section concludes by discussing the issues of bias, reliability, and the generalizability of the research.

### **4.1 Research Design.**

This section presents the secondary research questions, variables and hypotheses which are utilised in the second half of the thesis for studying FBO political engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### 4.1.1 The Secondary Research Questions

Chapter 1 pointed to the scant attention given to the sub-state level in the literature on FBO political engagement and Chapter 2 noted that the only in-depth studies of FBO engagement at the sub-state level focus on Scotland. On this basis it was argued that FBO political engagement at the sub-state level in the UK was under-studied, and that a systematic study of FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland was required. In light of this, this thesis' central research question asks:

'In what ways have faith-based organisations engaged with devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?'

The central research question presents a way for the thesis to consider how a range of FBOs, representative and socio-political as well as Christian and non-Christian, have engaged with the devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland. The research question enables the thesis to examine both the activity of the FBOs and how the devolved institutions have responded and engaged with the FBOs, providing a picture of how they have interacted with one another. It also permits the study to consider whether FBOs are active at the sub-state level, how they go about engaging and whether they have succeeded in influencing the decision making process. In order to explore the central research question in detail, three secondary research questions are developed using the three main strands of pressure group theory, discussed in Chapter 3; political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness.

The first secondary research question asks:

‘What type of political advocacy structures have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’

This secondary research question provides a way of analysing the political advocacy structures adopted by FBOs and whether FBOs have adapted their political advocacy structures in response to political devolution. Chapter 2 illustrated that some discussion has taken place of FBOs developing their political advocacy structures in response to political devolution, though this has not been analysed in a detailed manner. When assessing which political advocacy structure a FBO has adopted the thesis will consider the factors identified in Chapter 3 which includes whether the political advocacy structure is elite or democratically driven, staff or voluntary based and whether the organisation’s political advocacy structure is located across different political arenas. Utilising the mobilisation literature and Keating’s (2013) theory of rescaling interest representation, it is also possible to analyse whether FBO political advocacy structures have adapted in response to political devolution and if so, the extent to which they have done so. This can include adaptation from the central level to the sub-state level, or territorial adaptation whereby FBOs already active at the sub-state level might increase their capacity or change their internal political advocacy structures to engage with the devolved political institutions. This research question enables this thesis to assess whether FBO capacity differs between Wales and Northern Ireland in the context of different constitutional arrangements and any changes in political advocacy structures as constitutional arrangements evolve. Understanding the political advocacy structures of the FBOs, and analysing their appropriateness for engaging at the sub-state level contributes to building a picture of FBO effectiveness.

The second secondary research question is associated with the theoretical literature on pressure group strategy, asking:

‘What type of strategies have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’

This secondary research question enables the thesis to study the strategies utilised by FBOs and the status conferred upon FBOs by the devolved institutions. As noted in Chapter 2 and 3, utilising Maloney et al’s (1994) insider/outsider distinction enables a detailed response to the secondary research question because it highlights both the strategy pursued by FBOs and the status bestowed upon them. Separating strategy and status in this way ensures a much fuller picture of FBO engagement at the sub-state level. Likewise, the coalition formation literature will further aid in explaining FBO strategy by demonstrating whether FBOs jointly develop strategies together and/or with secular organisations with a similar agenda. Comparing the strategies pursued and the status conferred upon FBOs by the devolved institutions in Wales and Northern Ireland can also provide some indication of how religion and FBOs are received in the different regions, including the extent to which FBOs receive access to the decision making process. The findings from this secondary research question also contribute to building a picture of FBO effectiveness.

The final secondary research question builds upon questions regarding FBO structure and strategy in order to ask:

‘Are faith-based organisations at the sub-state level in the UK well placed to act as effective pressure groups in the decision making process?’

Drawing on the discussion in chapters 2 and 3, the criterion of effectiveness utilised in this thesis is as follows:

1. Has the FBO developed its political advocacy structure effectively for engaging with the devolved political institutions?
2. Has the FBO been fully consulted by decision makers?
3. Are the FBO's policy positions coherent?
4. If the FBO pursues an insider strategy, has it received peripheral, core or specialist insider status?
5. Has the FBO met its objectives?

Chapter 3 demonstrated that Steven's (2003: 45) measurement offers a way to build a picture of FBO effectiveness. However, limitations to the measurement were also noted, and hence the above criterion incorporates two extra questions. It includes questions on political advocacy structure and the status bestowed upon FBOs by decision makers. These extra questions ensure that the measurement includes whether the political advocacy structure of the FBO is suitable for the context in which it is engaging, and takes into account that selecting an insider strategy does not necessarily mean the organisation receives the access or attention which it needs to act as an effective pressure group. Another adaptation made is to the question regarding whether a FBO has met its objective. The question is examined in light of Mackay et al's (2005: 10) continuum, which understands influence as: 'recognition of a legitimate voice, provoking reconsideration of the way others think, changes in terms of the public debate, and concrete changes in policy outcomes'. In light of this, objectives met can be understood in a wider sense than simply changes in policy outcomes.

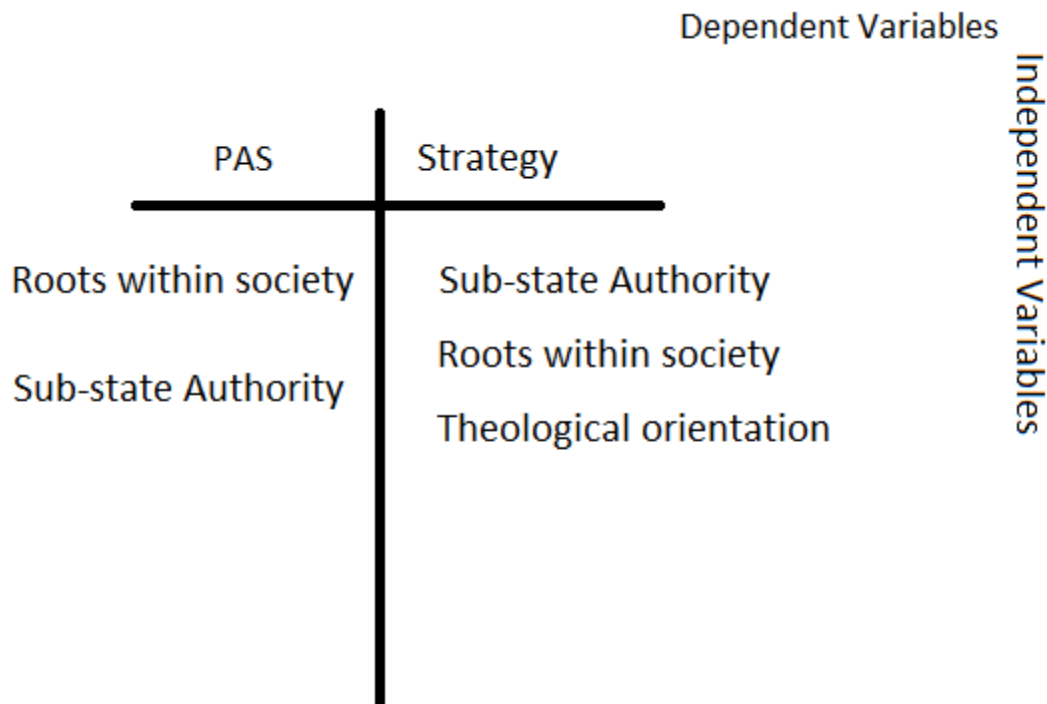
With this adapted criterion of effectiveness, the secondary research question asks whether the FBO is well placed to act as an effective pressure group, rather than whether the FBO directly influences policy. Rather than identifying influence directly, this research question asks whether the FBO's structure, strategy and status positions it in a way where it is likely to be effective. This allows the thesis to examine FBO structures and strategies and then assess whether they are appropriate for the context in which the FBO is engaging, providing a picture of FBO effectiveness.

#### 4.1.2 Variables

Dependent and independent variables have been selected to build testable hypotheses. The table indicates which independent variables are expected to affect which dependent variable.



Figure 6: Dependent and independent variables



The dependent variables selected are based upon the secondary research questions, which are grounded in the theoretical literature. The project's dependent variables are 'political advocacy structure' and 'strategy'. The political advocacy structures and strategies utilised by FBOs can, in tandem with an examination of pressure group effectiveness, illustrate how FBOs have engaged with the devolved political institutions. The data collected on FBO political advocacy structure and strategy can also contribute to evaluating FBO effectiveness.

The first independent variable, 'sub-state autonomy', relates to the claim made in Keating's (2013:121) work that suggests the greater the levels of devolved autonomy the more likely a pressure group is to adapt. Consequently, the level of devolved autonomy in the region under study is likely to affect the political advocacy structures and strategies of the FBOs.

The second variable relates to Maloney et al's (1994: 36) argument that specific resources influence the strategy pursued by the pressure group and the way in which it is received by decision makers. In light of this, the variable examines the effect a FBO's roots within society can have on its strategy and political advocacy structure. It is likely that strong roots in society provide FBOs with a range of specific resources which will influence its choice of strategy and the way in which it is perceived by government. Resources here refer not only to financial resources, but to the resources noted by Maloney et al (1994: 36) in the theoretical literature: 'knowledge, technical advice or expertise, membership compliance or consent, credibility and information and implementation'. These are likely to be more associated with well rooted organisations because they have been formed for a longer period of time; they are likely to have cultural and social recognition and credibility throughout wider society, and the elites within these organisations may have stronger contacts amongst political elites. The third variable relates to the argument in the theoretical literature (Maloney et al 1994: 23, Rose 1974) that the palatability of a pressure group's agenda influences the strategy it pursues. While 'ideology' and 'theology' do not have the same meaning, theology has been used to signify the place from where a FBO's agenda derives, similarly to how the ideology of a pressure group influences its agenda.

#### 4.1.3 Hypotheses

The variables have framed the basis for hypotheses which can be used to understand how the independent variables influence the dependent variables. Hypotheses 1-4 are based on the 'sub-state autonomy' variable with hypotheses 5-7 and 10 based on the 'roots within society' variable, and hypotheses 8, 9 and 11 based on the 'theological orientation' variable.

H1: 'As the devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the higher the levels of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs'.

H2: 'Regions with greater levels of sub-state autonomy will have FBOs with a greater capacity in their political advocacy structures'.

Hypothesis 1 and 2 are based on the 'sub-state autonomy' variable and connect to secondary research question 1. Keating (2013: 19) suggests that pressure groups can, in response to political devolution, 'assume the same territorial form as government, with their internal division of responsibilities matching it'. This can manifest itself in a number of ways. The political advocacy structure of an organisation could change, if for instance it created a branch at the sub-state level. A territorial organisation already located at the sub-state level could increase its capacity to engage by creating new structures and committees and/or appointing members of staff or mobilising greater support at the sub-state level in response to political devolution. In light of this, we would expect to see FBOs increase their level of capacity as the powers devolved become more extensive and entrenched (H1).

Keating (2013: 19) also notes that stronger governments 'define the relevant territory in a more constraining way...inducing groups to follow suit' and hence sub-states with greater levels of autonomy are more likely to have FBOs with a greater level of capacity in their political advocacy structures. It is therefore likely that the region with the greater level of sub-state-autonomy will also have FBOs with greater levels of capacity in their political advocacy structures (H2).

H3: 'As devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the more likely it is that the region's FBOs develop a distinct strategy for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

H4: 'Regions with greater levels of sub-state autonomy are more likely to have FBOs with distinct strategies for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 are also based on the 'sub-state autonomy' variable and are connected to secondary research question 2. Keating (2013: 119) notes that as pressure groups develop their political advocacy structures in response to political devolution, 'regional level interest politics might look much like the national level, at a smaller scale'. Conditions where powers are devolved and become more entrenched at the sub-state level, make it more likely that FBOs will focus on engaging with sub-state governments, and develop distinct strategies for this purpose. This may develop when an organisation at the sub-state level develops its own autonomy to demarcate its own strategy, away from the state-wide organisation. As Keating (2013: 130) notes, state-wide organisations will often leave 'provincial affairs to the provinces'. Likewise, a territorial organisation might develop a distinctive strategy for the sub-state level if more access points and opportunities open up in response to greater levels of sub-state autonomy as more power is devolved, or if these powers become entrenched and they learn how to engage with them. The greater the level of sub-state autonomy, the more likely we are to see FBOs with distinct strategies for the sub-state level (H3) and therefore the region with a greater level of sub-state autonomy is more likely to have FBOs with distinct strategies for engaging at the sub-state level (H4).

H5: 'The stronger the FBO's roots within the devolved region, the more likely it is to have a staff based political advocacy structure'.

Hypothesis 5 is based on the 'roots within society' variable and connected to secondary research question 1. As noted in Chapter 2, a number of organisations in Wales and Northern Ireland been engaged at the sub-state level for many years prior to 1999 and had some level of a staff based political advocacy structure. The FBOs with stronger roots within society are likely therefore to have developed their staff based political advocacy structures further in response to political devolution. We also know from Diani and Donati's (1999: 19-25) empirical research that environmental groups adapted to more professional political advocacy structures over time, and consequently we might expect to see FBOs which have existed for a longer period of time similarly developing more towards staff based political advocacy structures. A weakly rooted organisation could also have a staff based political advocacy structure if it has the financial donors to support the organisation, but it is less likely in general to have developed a staff based political advocacy structure.

H6: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is to utilise an insider strategy'.

Hypothesis 6 is based on the 'roots within society' variable and is connected to secondary research question 2. Maloney et al's (1994: 30) insider/outsider distinction notes that organisations 'which have limited and non-controversial aims can expect to advance them by insider means'. On the basis of this assertion, we would expect to see organisations with stronger roots opting for an insider strategy. FBOs which have strong roots within the society could be seen as important stakeholders, which enjoy a sense of legitimacy within society. These FBOs are also likely to possess specific resources such as 'knowledge, technical advice or expertise, membership compliance or consent, credibility, information and implementation guarantees' which Maloney et al (1994: 36) argue are needed in order

to pursue an insider strategy. In some political contexts this may differ significantly as it is possible that some FBOs with strong roots within society could be perceived as controversial or an anathema to decision makers. In such cases, the hypothesis could be falsified.

H7: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is that devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

Hypothesis 7 is similarly based on the 'roots within society' variable and connected to secondary research question 2. Chapter 3 outlined that the type of insider status a pressure group achieves is based upon the decision makers' perception of the group (Maloney et al 1994: 30). Maloney et al (1994: 30) argue that the relationship between decision makers and organisations is a 'bargaining' process. If a pressure group has the right resources to offer to decision makers, and is able to engage on an incremental basis (Maloney et al 1994: 36), then the group can achieve core or specialist insider status. Groups with stronger roots within devolved regions may be regarded as more useful by decision makers because they are more likely to be able to offer government these specific resources. This may be based on various factors including their role in society either historically or at the present time, a collective memory connected to the FBO as an institution, the FBO's influence upon identity either in the present or the past, or the FBO might represent a large membership.

Even so, it is important to take account of political context. Different groups will have the type of resources required in particular political contexts and at different times. It must also be remembered that some more recently established groups, or which do not have strong roots within the devolved region, might also be able to offer 'implementation guarantees' (Maloney et al 1994: 36) which the government cannot otherwise access. Some

more newly established groups could represent large memberships by virtue of being one of the few FBOs from within the faith community. Because of this, it is important to give particular attention to the way in which decision makers confer core or specialist insider status upon FBOs. FBOs with strong roots in society will possess specific resources with which it can bargain, but groups with weaker roots within society could also have specific resources, some of which might be unique to the faith community which it represents.

H8: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is to pursue an insider strategy'.

Hypothesis 8 is based on the 'theological orientation' variable and connected to secondary research question 2. Maloney et al (1994: 37) note that an organisation which wishes to pursue an insider strategy is required to take part in what has been termed 'bargainable incrementalism' (1994: 37). From this perspective, being able to give and take within the policy process is therefore key to pursuing an insider strategy. We would expect that theologically moderate FBOs would have the ability to take part in this bargaining process as they will find it easier to compromise on their positions than more conservative FBOs. A theologically conservative organisation is expected to be more likely to hold to 'absolute truth' and 'scriptural inerrancy' than a more moderate organisation. Indeed this was noted by Warner (2000) in her study of the Catholic Church's role as a pressure group across Europe: 'Whereas the essence of democracy is compromise, many of the Church's demands are not negotiable' (2000: 7). Rose (1974: 255) also argues that groups which hold to 'absolute values' will find it difficult to accept 'partial accommodation'. A more moderate group which espouses theologically liberal values is more likely to reject biblical literalism and hence could find it easier to compromise and embrace 'progressive social and political

initiatives' (Nash 2007:202). Furthermore, some pressure groups opt for outsider strategies because of membership expectations, even though their goal is 'realisable through bargaining' (Maloney et al 1994: 32). In the same way, members of theologically conservative FBOs might not be happy if a theological position is compromised upon. It is therefore possible to expect that more theologically moderate FBOs are more likely to pursue insider strategies.

H9: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

Likewise, Hypothesis 9 is based on the 'theological orientation' variable and connected to secondary research question 2. As noted in Chapter 3, the type of insider status a FBO receives is based on the way in which it is perceived by decision makers (Maloney et al 1994: 30). Maloney et al (1994: 36) note that core and specialist access is offered in return for specific resources which the government requires. Political debate in twenty-first century liberal democracies often espouse secular and liberal ideals. Consequently, more moderate FBOs would be expected to be more likely to have more appropriate resources to offer decision makers than conservative organisations. It will be expected that more moderate organisations can offer credibility to the policies of decision makers, because they are more likely to agree and endorse more secular and liberal policies. Some theologically conservative organisations might have large memberships, but it is more likely that in sub-states within the UK they will have smaller, yet more committed memberships than moderate groups. They are therefore likely to represent less people. Because of this, more conservative organisations are less likely to be able to offer membership compliance, consent or implementation guarantees. Rose (1974: 253-254)



notes that wider 'cultural norms' can influence a group's ability to gain access to decision makers. If a group's position goes against cultural norms or the public are culturally indifferent to their position, government is less likely to perceive the organisations as useful. More conservative groups are more likely to find themselves riding against cultural norms in this way. Even in less secular contexts the meaning of the term 'moderate' will be relative and hence will in all likelihood fit with the norms and values of decision makers. The norms and values of conservative groups are likely to be even more conservative than that of decision makers in a less secular context. Therefore, more moderate organisations are more likely than conservative organisations to have core or specialist insider status conferred upon them, because they are more likely to have the specific resources that Maloney et al (1994: 36) have noted as needed for a 'bargaining/exchange based relationship' with decision makers.

H10: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

Hypothesis 10 is based on the 'roots within society' variable and connected to secondary research question 3. The information gained from studying a FBO's structure and strategy (secondary research question 1 and 2) can be used to analyse whether FBOs are effective. It has been expected that FBOs with stronger roots in society are more likely to have staff-based political advocacy structures. While non-staff based political advocacy structures can also lead to a FBO being effective in its engagement, the sub-state political systems might offer greater access to consultation, and hence it might also necessitate a staff based political advocacy structure if an organisation is to make the most of this opportunity. In light of this, a staff-based political advocacy structure appears more

appropriate if a FBO wishes to be well placed to act as an effective pressure group (relating to question 1 and 2 of this thesis' measurement of effectiveness). A staff based structure also ensures the FBOs have the capacity needed to develop coherent policy positions (relating to question 3 of this thesis' measurement of effectiveness). Furthermore, it has also been hypothesised that strongly rooted FBOs are more likely to pursue an insider strategy and have a core or specialist insider strategy bestowed upon it (relating to question 4 of this thesis' criterion of effectiveness). All of these factors lead to the hypothesis that stronger rooted FBOs are better placed to act as effective pressure groups.

H11: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

Hypothesis 11 is based on the 'theological orientation' variable and is also connected to secondary research question 3. It has been argued that theologically moderate FBOs are more likely to pursue an insider strategy and to have a core or specialist insider status bestowed upon them (relating to question 4 of this thesis' measurement of effectiveness). This leads to the hypothesis that theologically moderate FBOs are better placed to act as effective pressure groups.

Overall, the above hypotheses are not absolute and some of the statements could be challenged. However each hypothesis offers a way of examining FBOs in the devolved political sphere and identifying the extent to which the level of autonomy at the sub state level, an organisation's theological orientation and its roots within society influence political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness.

#### 4.1.4 Case Study Selection

This section presents and justifies the two sub-states selected as case studies in this thesis and the four FBO case studies selected in Wales and Northern Ireland. The two case studies have been selected using the independent variable 'sub-state autonomy', with the FBO case studies in Wales and Northern Ireland selected using the independent variables; 'roots within society' and 'theological orientation'.

##### 4.1.4.1 Wales and Northern Ireland

As noted in Chapter 1 and 2, one of the greatest weaknesses of the literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK is that the lack of research on FBO engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland. Consequently, this thesis utilises the case study method to develop detailed findings in both cases that subsequently provide a basis for a comparative analysis of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. A systematic comparison of two sub-state regions of the UK will provide an empirical basis for building and refining broader conclusions regarding FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK (Burnham et al 2008: 70). The case studies are selected on the basis of the difference in the extent of 'sub-state autonomy' within each case. The difference in their religiosity also strengthens the case study selection.

As devolved regions of the UK, Wales and Northern Ireland operate within the same national policy framework. Furthermore, power was devolved to both regions in 1998/1999 as part of the same package of constitutional reform within the UK. Both Wales and Northern Ireland are advanced economies and yet are two of the weaker performing economic regions of the UK (see Harari 2016). However, while Wales and Northern Ireland have their similarities, the contrast between them strengthens the case for their

comparison. Looking in further detail at each case selected, Wales has less autonomy than Northern Ireland, as sub-state regions of the UK<sup>6</sup> and hence they are a suitable comparison for examining how the 'sub-state autonomy' variable impacts on FBO political advocacy structure and strategy.

Legislative and administrative devolution's roots run much deeper in Northern Ireland than in Wales. From 1921 to 1972, Northern Ireland had a unique system of executive, legislative and administrative devolution over a set of devolved powers from the UK (Birrell 2009: 1). The executive was also served by the Northern Ireland Civil Service, independent of Whitehall (Mitchell 2009: 77). The Northern Ireland Act of 1920 transferred a range of powers to Northern Ireland, but it also specified a list of reserved and excepted matters maintained as the responsibility of the UK Government (Birrell 2009: 1). Political devolution ended in Northern Ireland in 1972 when the British Government took action to transfer all statutory and executive responsibility for law and order to the UK Government due to rising violence and political turmoil in the region. The Northern Ireland Government's subsequent decision to resign led to the transfer of devolved powers from the Stormont Government and Parliament to the United Kingdom Government and Parliament (Birrell 2009: 1). This led to Northern Ireland's 'direct rule' from Westminster with an aspect of administrative devolution in the creation of the Northern Ireland Office in 1972 with responsibility for political and constitutional matters, security policy and operations, public

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<sup>6</sup> Hooghe et al (2010: Appendix B) give Wales and Northern Ireland the same score in the Regional Authority Index for 'self-rule' (8.0), as Northern Ireland's general purpose administration is subject to a central government veto while Wales' general purpose administration is not. While this veto does exist, the remainder of this section suggests that when one looks behind the data, Northern Ireland has a higher level of autonomy in practice than Wales. This was particularly so when considering the first period of devolution between 1999-2006.

expenditure and broad economic questions and for overseeing the whole legislative programme in regards to previously transferred matters (Birrell 2009: 21-22). Direct rule was only supposed to be temporary, but lasted until 1998. The Northern Ireland Assembly was established in 1998, but a period of suspensions consequently continued between 2000 and 2007 (Birrell 2009: 1). Northern Ireland's history, which has led to the Assembly's consociational design, marks it as unique amongst the UK's devolved regions (Wilford 2000, Knox 2010: 13-14). In contrast, Wales has a more limited experience of devolution. While administrative devolution on policy areas such as education existed in Wales from the beginning of the twentieth century, the Welsh Office was not formed until 1964. (see Mitchell 2009: 40-66). A major difference between Wales and Northern Ireland is that administrative devolution was not conferred upon Wales following a suspension of a previously existing devolved government or parliament. What's more, prior to 1999, Wales did not have a tradition of wide ranging separate legislative and administrative differences as did Northern Ireland (Birrell 2009: 2). Instead, Wales' first taste of political devolution in the modern era came in 1999 with the creation of the National Assembly for Wales.

Not only does political devolution have deeper roots in Northern Ireland than in Wales, but Northern Ireland and Wales' constitutional settlements differ substantially. Despite proposals for Wales to move to a reserved powers model in the Draft Wales Bill (2016-17) (Bowers 2016), Welsh devolution currently operates on a conferred powers model (Rawlings 2003: 7), specifying, and thus constraining, the areas of Welsh autonomy. From 1999, the UK parliament retained all primary legislative powers with secondary legislative powers devolved in 18 areas. Therefore, while Northern Ireland received primary law making powers from 1998 (Birrell 2012: 11), Wales only had powers over statutory instruments and secondary legislation to repeal or amend UK legislation for the purpose of

enacting it in Wales (Rawlings 2003: 5-6). It was not until 2006, at least partly in response to the Richard Commission, that the Government of Wales Act (2006) then gave the Assembly the power to pass Measures in 20 fields through LCOs, initiated by the Welsh Assembly and then approved by the Assembly and both Houses of Parliament (Birrell 2012: 18). However, it was not until an affirmative referendum in 2011 that the National Assembly aligned with Northern Ireland, receiving primary legislative powers in 20 areas (Birrell 2012: 20). Even so, Wales does not constitute a distinctive legal jurisdiction (Le Sueur et al 2013: 565)

In contrast, Northern Ireland has had primary law making powers since 1998 (Birrell 2012: 11) and its reserved powers model bestows upon the Assembly legislative competence in a greater number of policy portfolios, many of which are of interest to FBOs. These include areas which are common to Wales such as education, health and social care (Birrell 2012:15). However, policy areas such as marriage law, reproductive rights and welfare (see Bloomer and Fegan 2014, Birrell and Gray 2014) have been devolved to Northern Ireland but not to Wales. Furthermore, policing and justice was devolved to Northern Ireland in 2010 on the basis of the progress made under the St. Andrew's Agreement brokered in 2006 (see Perry 2011, Birrell 2012: 16). Not only do these policy competencies confer a greater level of constitutional autonomy on Northern Ireland in comparison to Wales, but these are also a range of additional policy areas of concern to FBOs. Historically, FBOs in Northern Ireland have been involved in welfare provision (see O'Corráin 2006), engaged with questions of sexuality and re-productive rights (see Connolly 1990: 118, O'Leary 2009: 124) and policing has traditionally been a policy area of great concern to both the Catholic and Protestant communities, and hence of concern to the churches who act as their representatives (Mitchell 2011: 40). The Draft Wales Bill,

responding to the Silk Commission's 2014 report, proposes the devolution of further powers to Wales such as energy and road transport policy (Bowers 2016), but this still leaves Wales trailing behind Northern Ireland in terms of the policy areas on which the Assembly can legislate. Therefore, notwithstanding the significant changes to strengthen the autonomy of the National Assembly for Wales since 1999, the Northern Ireland Assembly continues to enjoy a greater level of constitutional autonomy.

Northern Ireland also enjoys a greater level of fiscal autonomy than Wales. The Northern Ireland Assembly has had an increased right to borrow for capital expenditure since 2002 (Hazell 2003: 3), with Wales only receiving the power to do so in 2014 (UK Parliament 2014). Despite the Wales Act 2014 devolving some fiscal powers in response to the Silk Commission's 2012 report, such as stamp duty, landfill taxes and aggregates levy (UK Parliament 2014),<sup>7</sup> this is not comparable to Northern Ireland's power to set corporation tax rates (UK Parliament 2015).<sup>8</sup>

In addition to being valuable case studies for analysing how the variable 'sub-state autonomy' impacts on political advocacy structure and strategy, the level of religiosity in each region also strengthens the value of the comparison. Comparing two regions which have historically had high levels of religiosity, but have experienced differing levels of secularisation enables the study to examine how FBOs are engaging politically in these contrasting circumstances.

The 2011 census demonstrated a decline in those identifying as 'Christian' in Wales, as it dropped from 70% in the 2001 census, to 57.6% in the 2011 census (Davie 2015: 102).

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<sup>7</sup> These taxes are to be devolved in 2018

<sup>8</sup> These taxes are to be devolved in 2018

According to the 2011 census, Wales is also the region of England and Wales with the most respondents (32%) identifying as having 'no religion' (Davie 2015: 46). On the other hand, the census data show that religious identity is strong in Northern Ireland, with 93.5% of the population identifying with either Catholicism or one of the Protestant denominations. Furthermore, Church attendance in Northern Ireland is much higher than in Wales. Between 1980 and 2000 Church attendance in Wales dropped dramatically from 455,432 to 296,853, but Northern Ireland's Church attendance experienced a slight increase from 937,463 to 959,002 (Brierly 1997: 2.6). In 2008 the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey recorded that one third of the adult population of Northern Ireland were attending Church regularly (see Ganiel and Mitchell 2012:68-69) while the Tearfund Church attendance report recorded as many as 45% in 2007 (Ashworth and Farthing 2007: 10). This is in comparison with just 12% attending regularly in Wales (Ashworth and Farthing 2007: 10).<sup>9</sup> This is in contrast to over 50% of the Welsh population who were recorded to have attended Church in the 1851 religious census (see Davies 1981: 33-34).<sup>10</sup> This dramatic decline leads Ollerton to describe Wales as 'post-Christian' (2015: 74).

Religiosity may be much higher in Northern Ireland than in Wales, but secularisation is not an alien concept in Northern Ireland. Weekly church attendance has dropped from two thirds of the adult population in the late 1960s (Ganiel and Mitchell 2012: 68-69). This suggests that while religiosity is high in Northern Ireland, the region has felt a change in religious adherence, commitment and attendance since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is also important not to understate the connection between religion in Northern Ireland and its

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<sup>9</sup> Tearfund's church attendance report and the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey are the most recent studies on Church attendance in Wales and Northern Ireland.

<sup>10</sup> Davies provides a breakdown of attendance by 'poor law district' in Wales. While an accurate national figure of attendance is difficult (see Gill (1993: 23-26) for a discussion on this), it is over 50% in every district in Wales.



conflict between 1968 and 1998. The relationship between the conflict and religious ideas and symbolism (Mitchell 2011: 4-20) means that it will inevitably influence the way in which FBOs engage with Northern Ireland's political system, creating another distinction between the two regions.

As is evident from the literature review in Chapter 2, selecting Wales and Northern Ireland as case studies is also strengthened by the fact there is currently a greater amount of research on FBO engagement in Scotland than there is in Wales and Northern Ireland. Steven (2003, 2007, 2011) and Gillan's (2008) work greatly outweigh the research on FBO engagement in the other regions. However, the existing studies on Scotland can be used to triangulate the findings from the empirical chapters in the comparative chapter at the end of the thesis. Furthermore, Wales and Northern Ireland are also understudied generally in comparison to Scotland. Since 1999, a much larger body of literature analysing the development of social and public policy in Scotland has developed in comparison to the literature on policy in Wales and Northern Ireland. Moreover, Birrell and Heenan (2013: 767) have noted that Northern Ireland has often been excluded from comparative research on devolution in the UK because of the suspensions between 2000 and 2007 and because of political complexities of devolved governance in the region. Consequently, this thesis can provide valuable empirical research on the sub-state political systems in Northern Ireland and Wales.

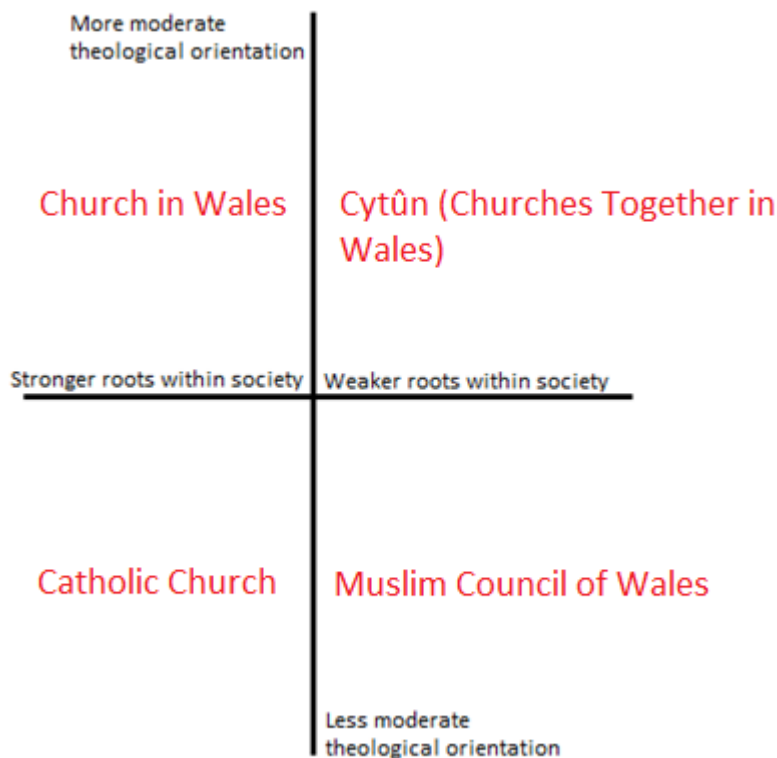
This section has outlined key relevant features regarding Wales and Northern Ireland that justify their value as case studies. This includes differences in constitutional and fiscal autonomy and in levels of religiosity.

#### 4.1.4.2 FBO Case studies

Now that the comparison of Wales and Northern Ireland has been justified, this section presents the FBO case studies selected for detailed examination in each case. The matrix is used to select the FBO case studies to ensure a good cross section of FBOs drawing in particular on the 'roots within society' and 'theological orientation' independent variables. Selecting a case study from each cell of the matrix enables selecting case studies which can point to the role that theology and roots within society have on the strategies FBOs pursue and the status they have conferred upon them by decision makers. This enables the findings to illustrate whether an organisation's roots within society or theological position change the strategy they pursue and whether it impedes or improves the status they have conferred upon them.

#### 4.1.4.2.1 Wales

Figure 7: Wales case study matrix



##### - 4.1.4.2.1.1 The Church in Wales

The Church in Wales has been selected in the 'strong roots within society / theologically moderate' location of the matrix. The Church in Wales is a representative FBO with the General Synod, the Board of Social Responsibility and the Bishops acting as apex groups which engage politically on behalf of the Church. As the largest Christian denomination in Wales (Institute of Welsh Affairs undated), it forms a key part of the region's Christian faith community. It is regarded to have strong roots within Welsh society, because of its nearing century old role within the region. The Church in Wales has an oxymoronic relationship with Welsh society being described as both 'yr hen fam' (the old mother) and 'yr hen estrones'

(the old alien) (Harris and Startup 1994: 102). Its disestablishment in 1921 meant that the institution was no longer a Church 'of' Wales, but another Christian denomination 'in' Wales. The Church is no longer established, but it has strong roots in Welsh society in terms of numbers of communicants, clergy, buildings and in its role within the Welsh public sphere (Harris and Startup 1994). As regards its educational role, the Anglican Church has been informally providing education in Wales since the eighteenth century and formally since 1811 (Ap Siôn and Francis 2014: 265).<sup>11</sup> The Church is politically active, represented by the General Synod, the Board of Social Responsibility and with the Archbishop as a figurehead. As regards its theological orientation, it is quite literally a broad church theologically, but is dominated by a more moderate theological perspective. This can be seen in the Church's early steps to ordain female Bishops in Wales (BBC News Wales 2013a). Another indication is the past two Archbishops of Wales, Rowan Williams and Barry Morgan, who have been theologically liberal and have both supported the full communion of homosexuals (Morgan 2011a: xiii, 276).

#### - 4.1.4.2.1.2 The Catholic Church in England and Wales

The Catholic Church is located within the 'strong roots within society / theologically conservative' locus in the Wales FBO case study matrix. Wales is not a distinct region within the organisation of the Catholic Church, but Cardiff is rather a 'province' (representing Wales) along with Birmingham, Liverpool, Southwark and Westminster. The Church is a representative FBO, with the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales acting as an apex group which represents it politically (Chambers and Thompson 2005b: 38). Despite its

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<sup>11</sup> The Anglican clergyman Griffith Jones Llanddwror organised circulating schools all over Wales in the eighteenth century. Schools were formally run by the Anglican Church through the National Society, established from 1811 (Ap Siôn and Francis 2014: 265).

centralised structure, the Catholic Church has been included as a FBO with strong roots within Welsh society because it is a visible institution and is numerically strong in members. Wales has not been easy terrain for the Catholic Church since the Protestant reformation, with Protestantism having ‘generally triumphed in Wales’ (Morgan 2004: 121) by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, it is a key part of the wider Christian faith community within Wales today. The Church enjoyed growth in Wales during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Morgan 2011a: 196-197,264) and by the 1980s had become the second largest ecclesiastical body in Wales (Morgan 2011a: 264) giving it influence and prominence within Welsh society. The Church has provided education in Wales since 1847 (Ap Siôn and Francis 2014: 265).<sup>12</sup> As regards its theological position, the Church is a theologically conservative FBO with teaching orientated within a more conservative biblical hermeneutic tradition, particularly relative to other Welsh Christian denominations such as the Church in Wales.

- 4.1.4.2.1.3 Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales

Cytûn is located within the ‘weak roots within society / theologically moderate’ locus in the Wales FBO case study matrix. Cytûn is a socio-political FBO with the primary aim of furthering ecumenical relationships amongst Wales’ Christian denominations (Cytûn undated). Its membership is made up of a number of Christian denominations, from the Catholic Church, to the main nonconformist denominations, the Church in Wales and many smaller Christian FBOs (Cytûn undated). Cytûn is therefore the main ecumenical body within the Christian faith community in Wales. Part of Cytûn’s work is to represent these denominations politically (see Davies 2008: 95-98). As noted in Chapter 2, Cytûn does not take its own political position, but instead seeks to facilitate the denominations in coming to

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<sup>12</sup> This was provided through the Catholic Poor Schools committee for the education of Catholic children (Ap Siôn and Francis 2014: 265).

their own position (Davies 2008:95). Despite having member denominations which are well rooted in Welsh society, Cytûn itself, as a socio-political FBO, has weaker roots within Welsh society. Cytûn has only existed since 1990, while its forbearer, the Council of Churches in Wales only formed in 1956 (Davies 2008: 1). Despite Cytûn's ecumenical and political work, it is unlikely that many of the members of the denominations which make up Cytûn's membership are fully aware of its work, and likewise, members of the general public are very unlikely to know about its existence, unlike other FBOs such as the Catholic Church or the Church in Wales, of which they are likely to have a cultural or social knowledge. Theologically, Cytûn's ecumenical nature means that it has a moderate theological orientation. As an organisation which seeks to find unity amongst its members, encouraging inter-denominational and inter-faith work (see Cytûn 2015-16), it lends itself to a more moderate theological orientation.

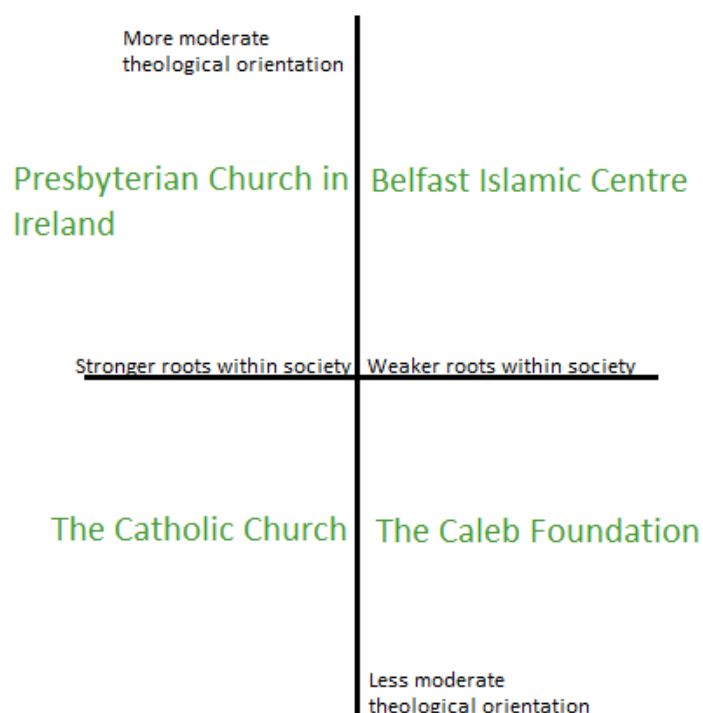
#### - 4.1.4.2.1.4 The Muslim Council of Wales

The Muslim Council of Wales (MCW) is located within the 'weak roots within society / theologically conservative' locus in the Wales FBO case study matrix. The MCW is a socio-political FBO which is an affiliate branch of the Muslim Council of Great Britain and which seeks to represent the Muslim faith community in Wales. The MCW has a clear political role, with its website stating that it 'seeks to represent the Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the Welsh public...through political and social activism' (Muslim Council of Wales undated a). Representing a wide range of mosques, Islamic charities, institutions, partners and individuals, the MCW is a key organisation within the wide ranging Islamic faith community in Wales. With regards to the roots within society axis, the Muslim community in Wales is arguably one of the oldest Muslim communities in Great Britain (Chambers 2008:

90), but its formal political representation through the MCW is a relatively recent development and hence it is weakly rooted within Welsh society. The Muslim community was traditionally represented politically through Imams and Sheykhs (Gilliat-Ray 2010, Gilliat-Ray and Mellor 2010 and Seddon 2014), and it was not until prior to political devolution (around 2000) that the community developed organised political representation. As regards the theological axis, the MCW is a theologically conservative FBO with conservative positions on social and ethical issues. For instance, the MCW's document 'Dispelling Myths about Islam' (Siddiqui 2005: 26-27), displays a rather conservative stance on social issues such as pre-marital sex and inter-marriage. The MCW's parent organisation, the Muslim Council of Britain, has also been accused of claiming to be Britain's 'moderate face of Islam' while at the same time pursuing a conservative agenda (Bright 2005).

#### 4.1.4.2.2 Northern Ireland

Figure 8: Northern Ireland case study matrix



#### - 4.1.4.2.2.1 The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

For the 'strong roots within society / more theologically moderate' category, the thesis has selected the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in the Northern Ireland FBO case study matrix. The Church is a representative FBO with its Council for Church in Society acting as an apex body which engages politically from within the denomination (Presbyterian Church in Ireland undated c). As the largest of Northern Ireland's Protestant denominations (see Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2014), it forms a key part of the Protestant faith community, and the wider unionist community in Northern Ireland. The Presbyterian Church has greatly influenced Protestant identity in Northern Ireland and still greatly influences Northern Ireland society today (Morrow 2004). Due to the Church's numerical strength and public visibility, it is regarded as a FBO with strong roots within Northern Ireland society.

Theologically, the Presbyterian Church has a moderate theological orientation. Theological differences have been some of the main divisive issues in the Church, as it has attempted to retain unity within the denomination. As far back as the 1830s there was division amongst the more liberal and conservative wings of the denomination (Ford 2004: 126). Indeed, the belief that the Presbyterian Church had become too liberal initiated the Rev. Ian Paisley to lead those disaffected by the denomination's 'ecumenism and liberalism' to form the Free Presbyterian Church in 1951 (Ford 2004: 128). In light of this, the Free Presbyterian Church's claim that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has become theologically liberal must be contextualised. The Free Presbyterian Church's understanding of liberal theology would differ greatly to the use of the term in Wales. Consequently, it is possible to view the Presbyterian Church in Ireland as a denomination with a more



moderate theological orientation, relative to more fundamentalist Protestant denominations that exist in the region (such as the Free Presbyterian Church or the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland).

- 4.1.4.2.2.2. The Catholic Church in Ireland

The Catholic Church in Ireland is located in the 'strong roots within society / less theologically moderate' locus in the Northern Ireland FBO case study matrix. The Catholic Church is a representative FBO which covers both the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, based in Maynooth, and the Northern Ireland Council on Social Affairs (NICCOSA), an apex body within it, represent the Church politically in Northern Ireland (see Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference undated). The Church has been a key institution within the Catholic community since the creation of Northern Ireland. Without political representation, the Church was for many years the main representative of the Catholic community (Mitchell 2011: 45-48) and is therefore the key FBO within the Catholic faith community and the wider nationalist community in Northern Ireland. There are fewer Catholics than Protestants in Northern Ireland,<sup>13</sup> but the unity of the Catholic Church as an ecclesiastical body makes it the largest denomination in Northern Ireland. Theologically, the Catholic Church in Northern Ireland is located in the theologically conservative locus because it holds to a teaching orientated within a more conservative biblical hermeneutic tradition.

- 4.1.4.2.2.3 The Belfast Islamic Centre

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<sup>13</sup> The 2011 Census shows that 41.56% of the Northern Ireland population identify as Protestant, however, only slightly less (40.76%) identify as Catholic (this is with 10.1% not identifying with a religion) – see <<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/census/2011/results/key-statistics/summary-report.pdf>>

The Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC) is located in the 'weak roots within society / theologically moderate' locus of the Northern Ireland FBO case study matrix. The Centre is a socio-political FBO and as the older of only two Mosques/Islamic centres in Northern Ireland is the key Islamic FBO within Northern Ireland's Muslim faith community. While the BIC is a Belfast based mosque, it claims a national role which is representative of Muslims across Northern Ireland (see Belfast Islamic Centre 2010: 1). Unlike the other large Islamic organisation based in Northern Ireland, (the 'Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association' (NIMFA)), the BIC has an interest in engaging politically as it endeavours to work with 'statutory bodies' (Belfast Islamic Centre undated). The BIC is the most active of Islamic FBOs in Northern Ireland, but it has relatively weak roots within society because it does not have ties to Northern Ireland society in the same way as the Catholic Church and the Protestant denominations, which are deeply entrenched in the social, political and cultural psyche of Northern Ireland (Mitchell 2001: 5-6). For instance, Marranci (2004: 20) has noted that it is only since the embedding of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland that Muslims in the region have felt confident to become a visible part of society.

The BIC is located as a theologically moderate FBO because of its unique context. The theologically moderate position of the BIC is illustrated by the way that it ensures that its worship is accessible to Muslims of 42 different nationalities (Marranci 2004: 20) rather than dividing its worship by ethnicity as in many European countries (Marranci 2003: 63). Worship at the BIC is also conducted in English rather than in Arabic, unacceptable to many scholars (Marranci 2003: 65-68).

#### - 4.1.4.2.2.4. The Caleb Foundation

The Caleb Foundation is located in the 'weak roots within society / less theologically moderate' locus in the Northern Ireland FBO case study matrix. The Caleb Foundation is a socio-political FBO, established in 1998 (Ganiel 2008a: 111). The organisation represents smaller evangelical churches which pertain to a particular fundamentalist theology, such as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Free Presbyterian Church and the Elim Pentecostal Church (Ganiel 2008a: 111) and hence makes up only a small part of Northern Ireland's Protestant faith community. Caleb's short existence and composition of relatively small evangelical churches means that it has weak roots within Northern Ireland society, particularly in comparison to other Protestant FBOs. Theologically, the foundation's creationist agenda (Jones 2012), its belief in biblical inerrancy (see The Caleb Foundation undated a) and its rejection of same-sex marriage (Caleb Foundation 2014) puts the Caleb Foundation solidly in the theologically conservative locus of the case study matrix. The Caleb Foundation is the most conservative of the Christian FBOs studied in this thesis, and this reflects Northern Ireland's more conservative baseline.

This section outlined the FBO case studies selected in both Wales and Northern Ireland. Basing the case studies on the independent variables using the case study matrix provides a wide cross section of FBOs engaging at the sub-state level and reduces case study selection bias. Now that these case studies have been outlined, the final section of this chapter presents the methodology for carrying out the empirical research.

## **4.2 Methodology**

This section discusses the thesis' case study strategy, which includes justifying the policy areas studied in each case study and how the data was collected and analysed. Following this, the issue of bias and reliability of the data and the generalizability of the research is discussed.

### **4.2.1 Case Study Strategy**

#### **4.2.1.1 Policy Areas**

The three policy areas were identified for the study of FBO strategy and effectiveness, and hence were used for studying secondary research question 2 and 3. The policy areas selected included education, the Human Transplantation (Wales) Act, same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland and constitutional affairs. Each policy area is justified in turn.

##### **4.2.1.1.1 Education**

This policy area was selected as a result of its ability to indicate how FBOs have engaged with the devolved institutions since 1998/9 owing to the FBOs' interest in this policy area prior to the establishment of the Assemblies. Furthermore, the extent of policy divergence in education in the regions, both historically and since 1998/9, also underlines its utility. Chapter 2 discussed FBO engagement with education policy in Wales and Northern Ireland prior to 1999. The way in which the Catholic Church lobbied Local Education Authorities for the right to Catholic education and its state funding in Wales prior to devolution was noted (Hughes 1999: 131-157). The Catholic Church in Ireland's campaign for fully funded Catholic education in Northern Ireland during the twentieth century was also discussed (McGrath

2000, Ó Corráin 2006). The Protestant denominations do not deliver education in Northern Ireland, having transferred their schools over to the state in the twentieth century (McKelvey 2006: 155), but Chapter 2 underlined their engagement with education policy prior to political devolution (McGrath 2000: 5, 9).

Post-devolution, FBOs engage with education policy as providers, and in their attempt to influence education policy (Donnelly et al 2006, Chambers and Thompson 2005: 43, Birrell and Heenan 2013: 778). Furthermore, FBOs which do not have an historical connection to education, such as the Caleb Foundation and minority FBOs in Northern Ireland have also shown an eagerness to engage with the policy area (Trotman 2007: 72, Ganiel 2008a: 111-113). The role of FBOs in education, the future of faith schools and their funding, as well as the curriculum, are areas which FBOs are likely to have attempted to influence post 1999.

Education is also an appropriate policy area for study because of the policy divergence found in education in both Wales and Northern Ireland both historically and since 1998/9. Wales has seen policy divergence in education since the beginning of the twentieth century (Mitchell 2009: 40-66). The creation of the Assembly in 1999 furthered education's divergent path as the Secretary of State for Wales' powers were put under the democratic control of the Assembly, leading to further divergence and a raft of distinct policy initiatives (see Reynolds 2008, Power 2016). Likewise, Northern Ireland has a history of policy divergence, with education policy separately administered in Northern Ireland between 1922 and 1972 and with the continuation of divergent education policies under direct rule between 1972 and 1998 (Birrell 2009: 230, 235). Despite political instability in Northern Ireland since 1998, this policy divergence has continued since the establishment of the Assembly (see Osborne 2006, Birrell and Heenan 2013, Gardner 2016). Historic and post-

devolution divergence in education makes it likely that FBOs have engaged with education policy as it is a mature policy area in both Wales and Northern Ireland and hence is a suitable policy area for study in this thesis. Policy divergence has also led to the development of distinct policy initiatives, and this provides an opportunity to study how FBOs have engaged with these policy developments. As a key policy area in Wales and Northern Ireland historically which has been influenced by the regions' culture, religion and linguistic differences, education will also be a strong signifier of whether roots within society and theological orientation influence FBO strategy and effectiveness. Studying this divergent policy area can also highlight the specific nature of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### 4.2.1.1.2 Moral policy areas

The asymmetrical devolution of the UK makes it difficult to study the same moral policy area in two cases that are likely to have sparked FBO engagement. Marriage law is a devolved competence in Northern Ireland, but this is not the case in Wales, making a study of how FBOs have engaged with the issue of same-sex marriage in Wales of limited use. Moreover, Wales has pursued legislation altering its organ donation model, but the Northern Ireland Executive has not pursued similar legislation. A similar bill was proposed to the Northern Ireland Assembly as a Private Members Bill in 2012, but did not progress any further (see O'Hara 2014). Therefore, instead of making a direct comparison, a comparison examining different moral areas provides valuable perspectives into FBO strategy and effectiveness at the sub-state level.

In the Welsh case, the Welsh Labour Government first proposed a white paper for The Human Transplantation (Wales) Act in 2011 and it was passed into law in 2013. The

legislation allows government to presume that an individual's organs can be donated on death unless the individual had opted out of organ donation (Ap Gwent 2013: 64). The question of organ donation is controversial amongst many faith communities with a range of FBOs in favour and others against the legislation for moral reasons (see Blake 2015). Consequently, it is likely that FBOs have actively engaged the executive and legislature on this issue.

In Northern Ireland, same-sex marriage legislation has been instigated by a number of Private Member's Bills within the Assembly, sponsored on different occasions by a combination of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from the Green Party, Alliance, Sinn Féin and the Socialist Democratic and Labour Party (see NI Assembly Hansard 2012, 2014, 2015a, 2015b). The first four bills did not receive enough votes to pass, but the fifth bill received majority support. As with each of the bills, the Democratic Unionist Party utilised a 'petition of concern', which is a lever that vetoes legislation that is seen as problematic by one of the two communities (see McDonald 2015). None of these bills were ever likely to bring same-sex marriage into law in Northern Ireland due to a lack of majority unionist support, but the debates and votes surrounding the legislation are symbolically important for both those in favour and those opposing the legislation. The Northern Ireland church's tradition of engaging with issues of sexuality (see O'Leary 2009: 124) makes it likely that they have engaged with the Assembly on this issue.

The often controversial nature of moral policy areas means that analysing FBO engagement in these areas can underline the strategies utilised, the government's perception and approaches to working with FBOs which disagree with its position, the question of whether saliency leads to coalition formation, and whether the FBOs and/or

government compromise on the issues. These policy areas also have the potential to point to divergence between the position and strategies utilised by more theologically moderate and more theologically conservative FBOs. The way in which the FBOs have been received by decision makers in respect of these policy areas can also offer an insight into the role of FBOs at the sub-state level.

#### 4.2.1.1.3 Constitutional Issues

Constitutional matters were at the forefront of Wales and Northern Ireland's politics during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The way in which the FBOs have engaged with the constitutional commissions which have acted as important milestones in both Wales and Northern Ireland are central to the study of constitutional issues in this thesis. In the case of Wales, this mainly pertains to how FBOs have engaged with questions regarding institutional design, powers to legislate, and the areas which the devolved institutions have autonomy to legislate on. These aspects will also be examined in the case of Northern Ireland. Attention will also be given to a wider range of 'constitutional' issues in Northern Ireland which are more distinctive to this case owing to the political conflict and continued political instability. These are areas which include policing, parading and flags and community cohesion. These are not strictly constitutional issues, but Northern Ireland's volatile history means that these factors are intimately connected to the constitutional stability of the Northern Ireland Assembly and will be examined in tandem with the other constitutional questions noted above.

The literature review in Chapter 2 also underlined that FBOs were active in this area prior to 1998/9. As noted in Chapter 2, the Council of Churches in Wales, and later Cytûn, was involved in the debate regarding self-government for Wales (Davies 2008: 90-95), and



literature by Mitchell (2011) and Brewer et al (2011) underline the intrinsic role FBOs in Northern Ireland played in constitutional debates, both as representatives and voices for their communities, as well as playing a role in brokering the peace itself. However, it is important to note that civil society organisations, such as the Churches were much more active in Northern Ireland than in Wales, where civil society's weakness has been noted (Wyn Jones and Patterson 1999: 181). Even so, constitutional issues is an appropriate area to study because it has been at the forefront of Wales and Northern Ireland's politics and because FBOs in Northern Ireland were active in this area prior to 1999, despite FBOs in Wales playing a more limited role.

#### 4.2.1.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Now that the case studies have been presented and justified, the process of data collection and analysis is discussed. The main qualitative methods utilised in this thesis have been semi-structured interviews and analysis of primary and secondary literature. As is evident from Chapter 2, the secondary literature on FBOs in Wales and Northern Ireland is limited, but literature pertaining to Cytûn, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland did offer some background to the organisations under study. However, primary sources proved to be much more important, as they provided context to the organisations under study. These sources included promotional materials, press releases, annual reports and the minutes of councils and assemblies. This documentation was readily accessible via the FBOs' websites, apart from the case of the MCW. In this case, the researcher received promotional materials via the organisation's office. The National Library of Wales archive also provided key publications by Cytûn which were not online. The researcher also received some 'internal' organisational documentation from the

organisations on request. This was particularly valuable in the case of the Catholic Church in Wales where the researcher received a number of key documents which were not publicly accessible. The final primary source that informed the study was the press coverage of different organisations and their engagement with the policy areas examined. Both the analysis of FBO engagement with the Human Transplantation (Wales) Act and the issue of same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland benefitted most from these online media sources.

Documentation relating to the policy areas selected for study was also extremely beneficial. White papers, consultation documents and committee evidence and reports provided a way of tracing influence in the policy process. This was particularly useful when examining FBO engagement with the Human Transplantation (Wales) Act where the FBOs gave oral and written evidence on more than one occasion. Hansard also proved a valuable source of information, particularly when analysing same-sex marriage legislation in Northern Ireland. In general, there was a high level of accessibility to primary resources regarding both the FBOs and the policy areas examined. Most of the documentation was accessible via the internet, with other materials retrievable in hard copy.

The semi-structured interviews were the most important source of information regarding the case studies. Elite interviews were employed so as to gain knowledge only available through particular actors. The interviews provided insights into the participants' experience of lobbying government and provided more detailed and in-depth information regarding the political advocacy structure and strategy of FBOs. Topic guides were used to compare findings across case studies. The topic guides were made up of open ended questions so that the researcher could probe the respondent further, enabling them to expand on areas, leading to richer data (McEvoy 2006b: 185). Attending a 'Depth

Interviewing Skills' course at the National Centre for Social Research provided an opportunity to improve the interview guides and the researcher's interviewing technique. For the purpose of consistency, 20 interviews were conducted in Wales and 21 were conducted in Northern Ireland.

FBO respondents with responsibility for political engagement were selected for interview. Interviewees consequently included policy officers, key members of the clergy with responsibility for political engagement and the chairs of councils or committees with a political role. Once initial contact had been made, it was possible to use the 'snowballing technique' to identify further respondents. Utilising this technique ensured that the research included as wide a range of suitable respondents as possible. Assembly Members, Members of the legislative Assembly, government ministers and civil servants were also interviewed to corroborate the accounts of both the FBOs and decision makers, thus strengthening the authenticity of the data. Interview respondents from the relevant FBOs were very accessible in Wales, as were interview respondents in Northern Ireland, once initial gatekeepers had been passed. Government ministers were more open to interview in Northern Ireland, than in Wales, where a number of civil servants were interviewed instead. Interviewing past and retired members of staff and informal conversations with journalists and members of the clergy (as advised by Burnham et al 2008: 239) were both helpful for corroborating the data collected from the formal interviews, allowing for triangulation.

The interviews were recorded electronically and a journal was also kept so as to record perceptions, insights and data that were not recordable through an electronic device, providing further context to the data collected (Rudestam and Newton 2007: 111). The journal was particularly helpful for recording what was not said, but was intimated through

silence and facial expressions (Schutt 2011: 331) and which comments were spontaneous and which were more forced (Schutt 2011: 330).

Aberystwyth University's ethical guidelines were met at all times when conducting this empirical research. The data was collected in an ethical manner with each interview conducted with the informed consent of the participant. The data have been used in the research with the agreement of the interview respondent and has been referenced anonymously, with the job title referenced on occasion when it adds weight to the claim made, while still ensuring anonymity to the respondent. Once the data had been collected, it was stored safely with password protection.

Interviews were transcribed and the data analysed with a coding method. It consisted of highlighting themes in the transcripts which corresponded to political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness. This allowed for cross-referencing between different interviews. From this it became possible to build the argument of the thesis.

#### 4.2.2. Research Bias, Reliability and Generalizability

Bias is a concern for all qualitative researchers. There is always the danger that the researcher might be looking for a particular outcome and therefore might, sometimes without realising, pursue a particular route of enquiry at the expense of others (Yin 2014: 73-76). Because of this, the researcher took precautions throughout the research process to try and eliminate bias. Firstly, the case study matrix served to ensure that the FBO case studies were selected using as rigorous a method as possible. Because the researcher comes from Wales, and Wales is a case study, the issue of subjective bias was also a possibility (Pierce 2008: 81). This could pertain to a number of issues, such as the researcher having a better knowledge of Wales than Northern Ireland, and hence focusing to a greater extent on

the Wales case study. In order to avoid this, while interviewing the same number of respondents in Wales and Northern Ireland, the researcher spent a longer period of time in field work mode in Northern Ireland, than in Wales. This allowed the researcher time to gain a better social, political, cultural and geographical knowledge of Northern Ireland in order to better inform the interview process. As an individual with political and theological concerns, there was also the possibility that this could have influenced the research process. The researcher made every effort to check and double check the findings are purely based on the data and not on any preconceived ideas or opinions.

Furthermore, the possibility of bias is particularly acute when conducting interviews in a divisive society, on a topic that has been the cause of disharmonious political and social relations (McEvoy 2006b). Interviewing FBOs in the context of Northern Ireland meant that the researcher had to choose his language carefully and be cautious of the information provided by respondents. Identity is an extremely important issue in Northern Ireland, and hence it was important when interviewing to be aware not only of the way in which the respondent understood himself/herself but also the way in which the respondent would identify the researcher (McEvoy 2006b: 186). Because of this, the researcher did everything possible to remain neutral. Even so, there is little one can do to avoid the respondent making assumptions about the interviewer's ethnicity, nationality, religion or political leanings which could influence the way in which questions are answered (McEvoy 2006b: 186). The researcher carefully took this into account when analysing the interview data. The researcher had experiences during interviews in Northern Ireland where a strong line or narrative was being pushed from a particular ideological perspective and hence a number of methods were applied so as to try and overcome this. By triangulating the information

provided from a number of different interviews, along with primary and secondary documents, it was possible to try and deduce what was biased and what was a fairer account. Probing was also employed in order to ascertain the respondents' views on certain positions with the hope of receiving a more nuanced account (McEvoy 2006b: 188).

A number of methods have been utilised to safeguard the reliability of the data collected. As regards the interviews, the use of open-ended questions ensures that the data collected is reliable and it allowed the respondents freedom to take whichever angle they chose on the question asked. The use of triangulation, which has already been discussed, has also helped increase the reliability of the data. Corroborating the findings in the interviews with other sources such as primary and secondary documents and literature has allowed the researcher to ensure that the data is consistent. Having outlined the case study strategy in detail, it should be possible for readers to follow how the research has been carried out. This should also contribute in demonstrating the reliability of the research (Yin 2014: 45-49).

It might not be possible to draw generalisations from this qualitative research in the same way as with quantitative studies, but studying a wide range of FBOs, selected using the case study matrix, with both weak and strong roots within the devolved societies and more and less theologically moderate makes it possible to draw generalisations regarding FBOs in Wales and Northern Ireland. The thesis also draws some broader insights into FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK by triangulating this thesis' findings with scholarship on FBO engagement in post-devolution Scotland.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented and justified the thesis' secondary research questions, variables and hypotheses, the selection of the two cases of Wales and Northern Ireland and the FBO case studies selected in each case according to the case study matrix. The chapter has also discussed the case study strategy utilised for this thesis and discussed the issue of bias, reliability and generalizability. The findings of this empirical research are now discussed in the second part of the thesis.

## **Chapter 5: The Case of Wales**

### **Introduction**

This Chapter investigates the three secondary research questions guiding the thesis in the case of Wales. The first section outlines the historical role of religion in Wales and discusses the potential opportunities political devolution has created for Faith-based Organisations (FBOs). Section 2 presents and analyses the findings in response to the three secondary research questions. In relation to the political advocacy structures of the FBOs, it finds that each of the FBOs have increased their capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions in Wales to differing extents. In response to the second secondary research question regarding FBO strategy, it finds that each FBO examined pursues an insider strategy, but supplements this with a responsible outsider strategy when their position is more controversial, or they foresee opposition from other interests. Each FBO has identified specific resources it can exchange with government decision makers, resulting in specialist or core insider status in return. Finally, examining findings with respect to the third secondary research question on FBO effectiveness, it illustrates that each FBO in the Wales case study are well placed to act as effective pressure groups. However, the weakly rooted FBOs are more reliant on the executive than the strongly rooted FBOs. Section three examines the findings in light of the hypotheses. It suggests that in the Wales case study devolved autonomy influences the political advocacy structure of FBOs, but roots within society do not influence their strategies or effectiveness as hypothesised. Theology does not appear to influence FBO strategies or effectiveness in this case.



## 5.1. The historical role of religion in Wales, and the potential opportunities for FBOs in post-devolution Wales.

This section briefly outlines the historical significance of religion and the relationship between religion and politics in Wales. It indicates that religion has played a key role in Welsh politics historically and, despite secularisation, plays a continuing role in Wales' political and public life. Following this, the opportunities the political devolution settlement in Wales affords FBOs will be discussed, serving as a backdrop to the chapter's empirical findings of FBO engagement in Wales' devolved political system.

### 5.1.1 Religion and politics in Wales.

In the introduction to his history of Christianity, the Oxford theologian Diaramid MacCulloch (2010: 7) gives a generous amount of attention to Wales and its Christian experience, highlighting the significance of the Christian religion and the greater than proportional role of Wales in the Christian story. The Christian tradition in Wales can be traced back to the early centuries AD (Walker 1976: 5-6). During the reformation, Protestantism became the national faith, and this manifested itself in nonconformity by the 1630s (Morgan 2004: 121). A distrust of state religion and a radical expression of faith meant that practising nonconformist religion was always a political act. However, over time the nonconformists travelled from being a persecuted sect to a respected establishment (Tudur 1992) making up what Davie (1994: 95) has referred to as 'established dissidence'. This new establishment greatly influenced Welsh national identity and culture (Morgan 1999) and acted as the great benefactor of the Welsh language well into the twentieth century (Chambers 2011: 274).

It was also at this time that religion played its most formidable part in Welsh politics. If at the beginning of the nineteenth century the landed elite were the sole organisers of Welsh politics, by the middle of the century, the centre of political activity was located in the chapels (Cragoe 2004: 173). By the 1880s, the Liberal party had adopted a swathe of nonconformist issues such as land reform, tithe abolition, the plea for a non-sectarian scheme of general education and the disestablishment of the Church of England (Morgan 1999: 329). The next generation of Liberal MPs fought hard to disestablish what they saw as the alien Anglican Church in Wales, arguing that nonconformity was ‘unambiguously Welsh’ (Morgan 1999: 330). They were successful in their campaign and by 1914 the Liberal government passed a bill to create an independent Anglican Church in Wales (Morgan 1999: 330). It is impossible to separate the religion from the politics in this highly symbolic piece of legislation.

If the Liberal party enjoyed the loyal support of nonconformists during the Victorian and Edwardian period, it was the Labour Party’s turn by the twentieth century (Morgan 1999: 331). Socialism, known in many contexts for its disregard of organised religion, was closely associated to the chapels in Wales. Preachers such as Silyn Roberts and Keir Hardie presented a theology which tied the nonconformist faith to a socialist creed (Morgan 1999: 332). This led to the development of a liberal theology, ‘inherently social in character’ (Pope 1999: 105). However, for every man that nonconformity won, another was lost because of the incompatibility of his faith with socialism (Morgan 1999: 332-333, Ap Gwynfor 2014: 34-35). Christianity also played an important part in the development of Welsh nationalism at this time. Catholic social teaching and its emphasis on subsidiarity greatly influenced Plaid Cymru’s founder Saunders Lewis (Sandry 2011: 146-147) and it was by aligning itself with

nonconformity that Plaid Cymru became a political force in Welsh life (Wyn Jones 2007: 183).

However, the latter half of the twentieth century was a difficult time for religion in Wales. As noted in Chapter 4, Wales has experienced deep secularisation with Church attendance dropping from over 50% of the population in 1851 (see Davies 1981: 33-34) to 12% by 2007 (Ashworth and Farthing 2007: 10). Secularisation and decline is not the only story however. Wales has also seen a change in its religious makeup due to increased immigration. The Muslim community which originated in Cardiff's Butetown has been steadily increasing (Chambers and Thompson 2005a: 34-35) and has become more active in the public sphere (Chambers 2006: 330-333). It has also been joined by a vibrant Hindu and Sikh community (see Office of National Statistics 2011, Chambers and Thompson 2005a: 38). There are also examples of churches demonstrating inventive ways of being church through social action and community engagement (Chambers 2011: 276-278).

As regards the role of religion in society, in the latter half of the twentieth century, religious leaders have also played important public roles. This was seen when religious leaders acted as intermediates between the miners and the National Coal Board in 1984 (Ballard 2008: 74) in an episode which left a permanent mark upon Welsh life. This incident was an important opportunity for church leaders to highlight their social and political worth to a society becoming less and less reliant upon religious leaders. As was noted in the literature review in Chapter 2, Wales' faith leaders also played a role in the campaign for self-government for Wales. As early as 1969, the Union of Independents, the Baptist Union of Wales and the Presbyterian Church in Wales all showed their support for self-government in the evidence they gave to the Crowther Royal Commission on the Constitution in the

United Kingdom (known as the Kilbrandon Commission) (Davies 2008: 88-89). This support was to continue and intensify throughout the twentieth century. By 1972 the Council of Churches in Wales agreed on a resolution on devolution. Faith communities and FBOs were seen as stakeholders in Welsh society, playing a part in the 1997 referendum on devolution for Wales (Andrews 1999). Chambers and Thompson's (2005a) research has also suggested, as discussed in Chapter 2, that FBOs which were undergoing a process of privatisation, have attempted a comeback in the guise of the devolved political sphere.

### 5.1.2 The potential opportunities created by political devolution.

It was noted in Chapter 1 that the devolution of power from Westminster to the sub-state level in Wales provided an opportunity for FBOs to engage politically in a way that had not before been possible. The National Assembly had limited powers conferred upon it in 1999, but as the Assembly's arrangements have developed, the potential for FBOs to engage with devolved decision making has also evolved. This section investigates these opportunities in greater depth by examining in chronological order a number of important milestones which have provided potential access and opportunities for FBO engagement since 1999.

As noted in Chapter 4, the Government of Wales Act (1998) transferred eighteen policy competencies from the Secretary of State for Wales to the National Assembly for Wales (Rawlings 2003: 62). FBOs engaged with the Welsh Office on a number of these policy areas under administrative devolution and hence while FBOs were not new to engaging with political institutions in Wales, political devolution set the basis for increasing the access points available to them. This democratisation might have reduced the ease with which certain privileged pressure groups could gain access to decision makers, but it also widened the possibility of access for organisations which were not a part of the tight-knit territorial

policy community based in the 'Cathays Park village' prior to 1999 (Deacon 2002: 160-176). Deacon (2002) does not dub any FBO as a key player in the Wales territorial policy community during the Welsh Office period. This is in contrast to the churches in Scotland and in Northern Ireland which are documented to have played key roles in their respective territorial polities prior to 1999 (Connolly 1990: 118-119, Keating 2010: 19). The widening of access brought about through political devolution in Wales may therefore have been a positive development for FBOs. For instance, an emphasis on policy consultation in Wales (Cairney 2008: 361, Chaney 2011: 268) has greatly increased the possibility of FBOs presenting their point of view to decision makers, something the more closed Westminster system did not always ensure (Watts 2007:160).

In 1999, the National Assembly for Wales had executive devolution conferred upon it under a reserved powers model. FBOs in Wales were therefore engaging with a devolved institution with limited powers. The Assembly's dependency on the Secretary of State to influence legislation at Westminster (Rawlings 2003: 500) and confusion regarding which powers lay in the hands of the devolved Assembly (Rawlings 2003: 69-70) may not have influenced the perceptions of pressure groups looking to influence policy in Wales. Even so, the Assembly's powers over statutory instruments and secondary legislation potentially provided opportunities for FBOs to engage with the Assembly on substantive issues as the institution repealed or amended UK legislation for the purpose of enacting it in Wales (Rawlings 2003: 5-6). The Assembly's seven subject committees with responsibility for scrutiny and enquiry (Birrell 2012: 100) also presented an access point for FBO engagement.

The Welsh Government's statutory duty to consult and encourage participation (Chaney 2011: 263) is also a positive aspect of the Welsh devolution settlement for pressure

groups such as FBOs. From 1999 onwards, 'Faith' received a seat at the Assembly's Voluntary Sector Partnership Council. This body does not generally discuss issues that relate to one area of interest (WCVA undated), but FBOs have the opportunity to engage with the Minister for Communities on a biannual basis through the partnership's 'Faith' representative. There is also some evidence that the Welsh Government's duty to promote equality of opportunity in Wales has provided the prospect for FBOs to engage with the devolved political system. For instance, Chaney (2009: 13, 2011: 257) has noted that there has been a broadening of the equality strands from the initial standing order which included race, disability and gender to incorporate a wider range of equality strands including faith. However, Chaney (2009: 13) has also indicated that 'faith' has received less attention from policymakers than other equality 'strands' with those representing faith communities lacking the mobilising structures of equality strands such as gender, children and older people, making it difficult for them to have their 'voices heard' (Chaney 2011: 257). Even so, in 2001-2 former First Minister Rhodri Morgan (Morgan undated) established the Faith Communities Forum with the specific aim, 'to 'facilitate dialogue' between the Assembly, Welsh Assembly Government and the major faith communities 'on matters affecting economic, social and cultural life in Wales' (Chaney 2011: 225, Welsh Government 2012a). The forum is made up of seven faiths, with each of the FBOs studied in the Wales case study represented. The forum has consistently been chaired by the First Minister since 2001 (Welsh Government 2012a) providing an opportunity for FBOs to have their voices heard. Not only does this offer face-to-face engagement with the First Minister, it also provides an opportunity for informal discussion behind closed doors, ensuring that decision makers are fully aware of the FBOs' position on a range of issues. This may have particularly

empowered weakly rooted FBOs, giving them access to the Welsh Government, which otherwise might not be possible.

The Government of Wales Act (2006) furthered the opportunities for FBOs in Wales to influence legislation. The Act brought a formal end to the corporate body model which had created confusion regarding the internal workings of the Assembly, and was detrimental to participation (Wyn Jones and Trystan 2001: 25). The formal separation of the legislature and the executive was therefore a positive development for organisations such as FBOs wishing to engage politically with the devolved institutions, providing clarity on who to approach on which issues. As noted in Chapter 4, the Assembly also received the power to pass legislation in the form of Assembly Measures in 20 fields through Legislative Competence Orders (LCO), initiated by the National Assembly and then approved by the Assembly and both Houses of Parliament (Birrell 2012: 18). Though there were substantial problems arising from the complexity of this system, this provided FBOs with the opportunity to engage with distinctly Welsh legislation. The committee stage of the legislative competence motions (LCOs) and Measures were dealt with by legislation committees (Birrell 2012: 100) which FBOs could potentially influence through providing evidence. However this process was highly complex. The Assembly's Public Petitions Committee was also established as part of the changes brought about by the Government of Wales Act (2006), allowing a 'diversity of social interests to engage in policy-making' (Chaney 2011: 263). In 2011, an affirmative referendum conferred primary law making powers on the Assembly, providing organisations such as FBOs with the opportunity to engage with the primary legislative process in twenty devolved areas. Since 2011, the

Assembly has passed a number of acts in a range of policy areas of interest to FBOs, such as education, health, social care and the Welsh language.

Another access point specifically for FBO engagement was created through the legislature in the formation of the Cross Party Group on Faith in 2008. The Cross Party Group on Faith works to highlight the positive contribution of FBOs to communities in Wales (National Assembly for Wales undated) and can be used as a vehicle for FBOs to extend their agendas, using supportive Assembly Members (AMs) to highlight their interests. This space could be particularly useful for FBOs if their policy position is contrary to government, and they are looking for allies within the legislature to support their case.

Overall, devolution has presented FBOs with a number of potential opportunities for engagement, but civil society organisations and interest groups have also noted that engaging with the petitioning and legislative processes of the National Assembly for Wales can be burdensome, requiring extensive staff resources and expertise (Day 2006, Rumbul 2013: 140). It may therefore be the case that some organisations will be better placed than others to make the most of the opportunities provided.

In summary, this section has shown that religion has played a key part in Wales' politics both now and historically. Further to this, the devolution settlement in Wales has provided a number of access points for FBOs to engage with the devolved political institutions. As has been indicated above, the opportunity for engagement has expanded over time as the powers conferred upon the Assembly have been extended. The remainder of this empirical chapter analyses how FBOs have attempted to capitalise on these opportunities by engaging with Wales' devolved institutions.



### 5.1.3 The Cases

Having discussed religion and politics in Wales and the opportunities political devolution has provided for engagement, this section provides the background to the political engagement of the FBO case studies prior to 1999. This acts as a backdrop to the post-devolution findings in the following sections. Each FBO case study is discussed in turn.

Since its disestablishment, the Church in Wales has been active in Welsh politics, with many of its Archbishops taking a great interest in political issues. This political engagement heightened under the leadership of Archbishop Glyn Simon in 1968, who campaigned on issues such as the Welsh language and nuclear disarmament (Walker 1976: 177). The Church in Wales has also used its directors of education in each diocese to engage in education policy, as is noted by Jones (1990: 159). The Church also had a member of staff who engaged with political issues, before political devolution, with responsibility for what was called 'social responsibility'.<sup>14</sup> Education has always been a major area of concern for the Church, but it does not seem evident that the Church in Wales had the same status within the Wales territorial policy community as the Church of Scotland and Church of Ireland had in their respective territorial policy communities prior to 1999.

As regards the Catholic Church in Wales, Hughes (2014: 75-76) notes that by the 1960s Catholics had become an accepted part of Welsh life and began to work towards creating a 'Welsh consciousness' under the leadership of Welsh speaking Archbishop, Michael McGrath (Hughes 2014: 76). In terms of pre-1999 lobbying, the Church's campaign for Catholic education and funding has already been noted (Hughes 1999: 131-157). However, like the Church in Wales, the Catholic Church does not seem to have possessed

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Church in Wales (3 March 2015).

the status the Catholic Church of Scotland or the Catholic Church of Ireland enjoyed as part of their respective territorial policy communities prior to 1999.

The Council for Churches in Wales and Cytûn were politically active for most of the second half of the twentieth century. As noted in the previous sub-section, they engaged with the question of self-government for Wales and industrial disputes (Davies 2008: 92, 96-97, Hibbs 1985). They also engaged on the question of ‘the moral fabric of Welsh society’ (Williams and Davies 1996: 1). However, this political engagement was limited as Cytûn only had two members of staff prior to 1999, a General Secretary and an administrative assistant (Cytûn 1999).<sup>15</sup> Cytûn’s political engagement was undertaken by the General Secretary with willing volunteers, mainly clergy from Cytûn’s member denominations (see Williams and Davies 1996, Hibbs 1985).

Before the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales, the Muslim community engaged politically on an ad-hoc basis through community figureheads. For instance, Sheikh Al-Hakimi represented the community to Cardiff’s civic authorities from as early as the 1940s, negotiating appropriate burial spaces (Gilliat-Ray and Mellor 2010) as well as ensuring a local authority contribution towards the building of the first mosque in Wales in 1947 (Chambers 2015: 212). The story of Muslim engagement with local government presents an image of community leaders gaining ground on behalf of a small Muslim minority. However, while there is evidence of successful engagement with local government, little is known regarding the Welsh Office’s engagement with the Muslim community prior to political devolution.

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with senior respondent formerly of the Council of Churches in Wales and Cytûn (January 29<sup>th</sup> 2015).

In sum, each FBO has experience of engaging politically prior to 1999. However, this political engagement is mixed, with some FBOs in Wales engaging in a much more active manner.

#### 5.1.4 The Hypotheses

Before reporting on the findings of how the FBOs have engaged with the devolved political system in section 2, 3 and 4, the expected findings, as hypothesised, are outlined. For this case, it is possible to test hypotheses 1, 3 and 5-11.

H1: 'As the devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the higher the levels of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs'.

In response to Hypothesis 1, we expect to see a greater level of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs as a greater level of autonomy is devolved to Wales and as the devolution settlement becomes more entrenched.

H3: 'As devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the more likely it is that the region's FBOs develop a distinct strategy for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

In respect to hypothesis 3, we expect so see FBOs in Wales developing more distinct strategies as the powers in the region become more extensive and entrenched.

H5: 'The stronger the FBO's roots within the devolved region, the more likely it is to have a staff based political advocacy structure'.

There is an expectation that the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church will have a staff-based political advocacy structure owing to their stronger roots in society, while the

Muslim Council of Wales (MCW) and Cytûn will not, owing to their relatively weaker roots within society.

H6: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is to utilise an insider strategy'.

On the basis of Hypothesis 6, there is a greater expectation that the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church will pursue an insider strategy than the MCW and Cytûn.

H7: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is that devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

Hypothesis 7 leads to the expectation that the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church are more likely to have core or specialist insider status conferred upon them by the devolved institutions than Cytûn and the MCW.

H8: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is to pursue an insider strategy'.

Hypothesis 8 takes us in a different direction. In light of this hypothesis, there is a greater expectation that the Church in Wales and Cytûn will pursue an insider strategy than the MCW and the Catholic Church.

H9: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

Similarly, Hypothesis 9 leads to the expectation that the Church in Wales and Cytûn are more likely to have core or specialist insider status conferred upon them than the MCW and the Catholic Church.

H10: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

In response to Hypothesis 10, we expect to see the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church better placed to act as effective pressure groups than the MCW and Cytûn.

H11: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

Hypothesis 11 on the other hand, leads to the expectation that the Church in Wales and Cytûn are better placed to act as effective pressure groups than the MCW and the Catholic Church.

## **5.2. Findings and Analysis**

Section 1 provided an historical context for FBO political engagement and assessed the hypotheses in the case of Wales. On this basis, the findings in relation to FBO engagement post-1999 can now be presented.

### **5.2.1 Political Advocacy Structure: Findings**

This section examines the first secondary research question, which asks:

'What type of political advocacy structures have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?'

As noted in Chapter 4, this thesis examines three aspects of FBO political advocacy structure; whether it is a centralised or devolved organisation, whether its elite run or democratic and whether its engagement is carried out by volunteers or professional staff members. Each is considered below in the case of the FBOs selected for Wales. How the

FBOs have adapted to engage with the devolved political institutions in Wales is also examined. The section suggests that the majority of FBOs in the case of Wales are territorial organisations affiliated to the central level with a high level of autonomy. The Catholic Church, as the only non-territorial organisation under study, has devolved some level of autonomy from the central level to the sub-state level over education policy. Further to this, apart from the MCW, each FBO has increased the capacity of its political advocacy structure by appointing staff to engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level. The MCW on the other hand has developed a voluntary based political advocacy structure since 2001 so as to engage with the devolved political institutions in Wales.

#### 5.2.1.1 The Church in Wales

The Church in Wales is a territorial organisation which utilises a partially democratic based political advocacy structure, although elites are dominant in its day to day engagement. The organisation is staff based with limited opportunity for voluntary engagement. The Church has increased its staff capacity to engage with the devolved institutions.

With regards to whether the Church in Wales has a devolved or centralised political advocacy structure, it is what Keating et al (2009) refer to as a territorial organisation affiliated to the central level. Since its disestablishment in 1914, it has been affiliated to the Church of England as one of the 38 member churches of the worldwide Anglican Communion (see Anglican Communion undated), but this affiliation is loose, and it enjoys a high level of autonomy at the territorial level. For instance, the Church in Wales makes its own theological, ecclesiastical and political decisions (Doe 2004: 99-100). The Church has a democratic aspect to its political advocacy structure, but is heavily elite dominated. The Church's Governing Body is the democratic organ of the Church in Wales, making decisions

regarding the Church's policy since 1918 (Harris and Startup 1999: 2-3) and is made up of laity, clergy and bishops (Church in Wales undated b). This forum enables influencing Church policy and political positions through voting and presenting private members' motions (Church in Wales 2014). When a motion is passed, the Church in Wales' staff pursues the issue on behalf of the Governing Body.<sup>16</sup> This is an important democratic outlet, but it only meets twice a year, with items for the agenda organised well in advance, somewhat limiting membership involvement.<sup>17</sup> Because of this, the Bishops have considerable power over the Church's political agenda and engagement, as the bishops can take a position together or individually, which is often reported in the media.

The Church in Wales's political advocacy structure prioritises staff over voluntary engagement. The Church has limited voluntary involvement with some lay members sitting on the Church's committees such as 'Church Action for Sustaining the Environment'. However, these committees are sub-groups of the 'Church and Society' department and are therefore headed by a Bishop.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, much of the Church's engagement is carried out by professional staff members. For instance, the Archbishop and bishops utilise a communications officer to communicate political positions on their behalf (see Church in Wales undated c). The role of professional staff in the Church's political engagement has also increased since political devolution as the Church has adapted to engage with the devolved institution. In 1999, the Church in Wales did not appoint a policy officer, but instead decided that Cytûn's Liaison Officer to the National Assembly would represent the Church politically. However, by 2002, the Church decided to appoint a 'Bishops' Adviser for

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<sup>16</sup> Interview with a senior respondent from the Church in Wales (7<sup>th</sup> January 2015).

<sup>17</sup> Interview with a senior respondent from the Church in Wales (7<sup>th</sup> January 2015).

<sup>18</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Church in Wales (19th February 2015 and 3 March 2015).

Church and Society' to engage politically.<sup>19</sup> This role includes attending meetings with ministers and officials as well as responding to formal consultations.<sup>20</sup> The researcher was not explicitly told in an interview with Church staff members that the appointment responded to the Church's need to engage with the Assembly, but the way in which the respondents discussed their relationship with Cytûn gave this impression. For instance, when asked how the Church balanced its engagement with Cytûn's engagement, the respondent noted:

if you try and get something that everybody can sign up to, it's going to end up being very, very bland. It's hard, I think it's probably harder for them (Cytûn) than it is for us because we can always say well we're going to say what we want to say no matter what.<sup>21</sup>

This suggests that the Church in Wales realised that it needed to ensure that it had a distinct voice to engage politically from 2002 onwards through the Church's Advisor for Church and Society. When the Church appointed a new Advisor in 2011, its role was outlined as working with the Welsh Government and assisting the Bishops on policy development (South Wales Evening Post 2011). The Church was therefore structurally well positioned to engage with the Assembly as it received primary law making powers.

In sum, the Church is a territorial organisation affiliated to an organisation at the central state level. Its political advocacy structure has a democratic organ within it, but elite decision making plays an important role through its Bishops. The Church's political advocacy structure allows for some voluntary political engagement, but its Bishops do the majority of

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Senior respondents from the Church in Wales (3rd March 2015)

<sup>20</sup> Interview with a senior respondent from the Church in Wales (7<sup>th</sup> January 2015).

<sup>21</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Church in Wales with responsibility for political engagement (7<sup>th</sup> January 2015).



the Church's political engagement. The Church has increased its capacity by appointing a member of staff from 2002 onwards to ensure its voice is heard within the sub-state political system.

#### 5.2.1.2 The Catholic Church in England and Wales

The Catholic Church has an elite run political advocacy structure and utilises professional staff over voluntary engagement. Its political advocacy structure is centralised, but has since 2015 experienced an element of 'institutional isomorphism', opening a branch office with responsibility for education in response to policy incongruence between Wales and Westminster.

The Catholic Church has an elite run political advocacy structure. Its engagement is therefore dominated by elites, whether this is bishops or professional members of staff. Its main decision making body is the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales, in which the laity has no direct involvement. The Welsh Bishops also speak out on distinctly Welsh issues (BBC News Wales 2011a). Not only is the decision making process of the Church elite dominated, but its political advocacy structure utilises professional staff over voluntary activism. The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is served by a London based secretariat. This includes a range of departments which take part in political engagement, including the Catholic Education Service (CES) and the Parliamentary Affairs team which act as apex bodies within the Catholic Church. There is some minimal opportunity for lay involvement, as members with particular expertise can take part in the

work of a Commission. The work of this Commission might then feed into the wider political engagement of the Church.<sup>22</sup>

As a part of the larger province of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, the Church has little autonomy at the territorial level, with the Church acting as an UK organisation engaging at the territorial level on most issues. However, since political devolution, the Catholic Church in Wales has experienced a partial level of Keating's (2013:119) institutional isomorphism. The Church has provided some autonomy to Wales, by opening a branch office of the Bishops' Conference's Catholic Education Service and by appointing a CES Advisor to engage with the area of education in Wales in January 2015 (see Catholic Education Service 2015: 12). This advisor works part time for the CES and part time for the Diocese of Cardiff (Catholic Education Service undated b). The advisor is responsible for building proactive relationships with the Welsh Government and Assembly, engaging with consultation processes and representing the CES at meetings with ministers and other relevant bodies (Catholic Education Service undated b). This is only a small level of adaptation, but the reasons behind it are insightful. According to respondents from the Church with responsibility for education, the CES did not see the development in education policy in Wales as divergent enough to justify the need for a regional officer in Wales until 2015.<sup>23</sup> However, he noted that changes to education policy after the establishment of the coalition government in Westminster required a regional advisor to engage politically on behalf of the Catholic Church in Wales.<sup>24</sup> This would suggest that policy divergence between Westminster and the Assembly led to the Catholic Church devolving autonomy from London to Wales. Respondents from the Church did not rule out devolving further power to Wales if

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<sup>22</sup> Interview with respondent involved with the Catholic Church in Wales (26<sup>th</sup> February 2015).

<sup>23</sup> Interview with senior respondent from CES (11<sup>th</sup> February 2015).

<sup>24</sup> Interview with senior respondent from CES (11<sup>th</sup> February 2015).

policy areas of interest such as justice or ‘life issues’ issues were devolved from Westminster.<sup>25</sup> The role is still answerable to the London office (Catholic Education Service undated b), but, it is worth noting that the advisor’s engagement with the Welsh Government and Local Education Authorities in Wales in 2015 was given its own short chapter in the CES’ Annual Report (Catholic Education Service 2015: 12), as opposed to a sub-section in the previous year’s report (Catholic Education Service 2014: 7). This signals that CES now perceives its engagement in Wales to be somewhat separate to its engagement in England.

In summary, the Catholic Church in Wales is elite driven with very little opportunity for member involvement in decision-making and prioritises professional staff over volunteer engagement. It has partial autonomy at the sub-state level, having increased its capacity in Wales in 2015 by appointing a member of staff with responsibility for education in response to the policy incongruence which has developed between England and Wales.

#### 5.2.1.3 Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales

Cytûn is a territorial organisation with a loose affiliation to the central level. It has a democratic political advocacy structure and is staff based, using only limited voluntary engagement. Cytûn has increased its staff capacity to engage with the devolved institution.

As a member of ‘Churches Together in Britain and Ireland’, Cytûn is what Keating et al (2009) refer to as a territorial organisation affiliated to the central level. It is a fully autonomous body made up of denominations, churches and agencies in Wales (see Cytûn undated) and is funded by its members through an annual subscription fee (see Cytûn 2008) making it financially autonomous from the central level. Cytûn’s political advocacy structure

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with senior respondent from CES (11<sup>th</sup> February 2015).

is democratic. In contrast to its predecessor body, the Council of Churches in Wales, it does not take a lead for churches on issues, but encourages discussion and consideration of different issues amongst its membership (Davies 2008:95, Cytûn 2015-16). An interviewee from Cytûn explained that this principle is extended to the organisation seeking to represent the different positions of its member churches to the devolved institutions.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, Cytûn's political advocacy structure is such that it consults its members' views and represents these to decision makers, while encouraging common working. Representation is therefore always a careful balancing act for Cytûn. For instance, in 1997, Cytûn was accused of being biased in favour of devolution by some of its members (Cytûn News 1997), while other members criticised Cytûn for not giving enough support for devolution (Davies 2008: 96). Cytûn's inability to lead on issues has frustrated some affiliated members.<sup>27</sup>

In response to political devolution, Cytûn's political advocacy structure has become more staff focused. As was noted in Section 1, prior to 1999 Cytûn's political engagement was limited by a lack of staff capacity but this has changed in response to devolution. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1998, Cytûn's Council decided that working with the National Assembly and enabling churches to work with the institution would become one of its priorities (Cytûn News 1998) and hence Cytûn appointed a political liaison officer to the National Assembly in 1999 (Cytûn News 1999). Cytûn emphasised that this was for liaising rather than lobbying purposes (Cytûn News 1999), but the role was responsible for engaging in the policy process (Ballard 2008: 78). Interview respondents from Cytûn gave the impression that it appointed this member of staff from 1999 because it was eager to engage with the new institution and

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with senior respondents from Cytûn (8<sup>th</sup> January 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Interview with senior respondents from two of Cytûn's member denominations (January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015 and January 29<sup>th</sup> 2015).

keen to offer support to the devolution process.<sup>28</sup> This makes sense as the appointment was also made in the shadow of Cytûn's involvement with the debate for self-government, the Council of Churches in Wales' support for devolution in 1979, and the support for devolution by a number of the nonconformist denominations represented by Cytûn (Davies 2008: 88-95). Furthermore, the liaison officer appointed in 1999 had campaigned vigorously for an Assembly in the referendum in 1997 (Andrews 1999: 162). It is no surprise, therefore, that Cytûn appointed a liaison officer from this early point. While this role has subsequently become a part time role, the Policy Officer and Chief Executive both engage politically as part of their roles (the Chief Executive was the Policy Officer prior to becoming the Chief Executive) and hence the impression is that the same level of political engagement continues despite this change.

In sum, Cytûn is a territorial organisation affiliated to an organisation at the central state level from which it is wholly autonomous. Its political advocacy structure is democratic, consulting its member denominations and representing their position to decision makers. Cytûn's political engagement is staff focused, particularly since it increased its staff capacity to engage with the National Assembly for Wales in 1999.

#### 5.2.1.4 The Muslim Council of Wales

The MCW is a territorial organisation affiliated to the central level. Its political advocacy structure is democratic and voluntary based. It has mobilised as an organisation and developed this voluntary based political advocacy structure to engage with the devolved institution.

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<sup>28</sup> Interview with senior respondents from Cytûn and (8<sup>th</sup> January 2015) and a senior respondent formerly of the Council of Churches in Wales and Cytûn (January 29<sup>th</sup> 2015).

The MCW is a territorial organisation affiliated to a UK organisation. The MCW is affiliated to the Muslim Council of Britain (Jilani 2014: 223), but it has full autonomy over devolved matters (Ahmed 2016) and hence a large amount of autonomy to structure its advocacy for the purpose of engaging with decision makers in Wales. However, the MCW also speaks out on national and international issues, offering a distinctly Welsh Islamic perspective on issues such as the bombings in London in 2005 (BBC News Wales 2005) and the Charlie Hebdo shooting in Paris in 2015 (Wightwick 2015). The MCW's autonomy comes from the fact that it is not a branch of the Muslim Council of Britain, but instead was mobilised in Wales in response to political devolution, only affiliating to the Muslim Council of Britain after its initial mobilisation. In 2001, the community was gathered by the then First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, to share its issues with him and his officials.<sup>29</sup> The First Minister was keen to ensure community cohesion amongst the different faith communities in Wales, particularly after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 (Morgan undated). The Muslim community were keen to oblige, with 70 representatives from the faith community attending the meeting. With such a large number in attendance, it was difficult for the Muslim community to speak with a coherent voice and hence the Muslim community considered it necessary to respond to political devolution with a 'local body'.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Morgan asked the community to choose representatives who could speak on their behalf.<sup>31</sup> It was from this pivotal moment that the MCW began to develop its political advocacy structure so that the Muslim community could engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level. A MCW interviewee explained that as the devolution process has continued, and become more entrenched in the region, the MCW has become more comfortable engaging in the sub-

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>30</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>31</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

state political system, as the organisation has become part of the fabric of the devolution process.<sup>32</sup>

The MCW has a democratic political advocacy structure based on a delegate system. The Council is structured so that affiliated members can feed into the process of political engagement (Muslim Council of Wales undated b). Affiliated members include mosques, Muslim organisations and charities (Ahmed 2016). Each affiliated member nominates a delegate to join the MCW's General Council. From this General Council, an Executive Council is chosen. This Executive Board then chooses a General Secretary.<sup>33</sup> A small team of individuals then represent the affiliated members in a voluntary capacity. The MCW's political advocacy structure is voluntary based. A key figure in the Council, Saleem Kidwai, acted as secretary of the MCW for the first five years, and is now the organisation's General Secretary on a voluntary basis (Jilani 2014: 223). Further to this, the MCW encourages member activism, as was evident during the 'Yes for Wales' referendum campaign in 2011 (Reflections 2011b, Whitaker 2014: 14).

In summary, the MCW is a territorial organisation affiliated to the central level but is wholly autonomous in its political engagement. This autonomy comes from having been partly mobilised with the support of the First Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government, which conferred legitimacy upon the organisation from 2001 onwards. The Council has a democratic decision making process based on a delegate system and utilises volunteers in its engagement rather than professional staff.

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<sup>32</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>33</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

### 5.2.2 Political Advocacy Structure: Analysis

The case of Wales indicates that the majority of FBOs are territorial organisations, with loose affiliation to the central level, enjoying a high level of autonomy. The Catholic Church on the other hand has minimal autonomy at the sub-state level over one policy area, education, through the opening of a branch office with a Wales adviser for education in January 2015. Apart from the Catholic Church, each FBO has an aspect of democracy in their political advocacy structures. Cytûn and the MCW use a delegate system to provide a voice for their membership in their political advocacy, while the Church in Wales balances an aspect of delegated democracy through the Governing Body with elite engagement through its bishops. The findings suggest that the Bishops are dominant within the political advocacy structure. Each FBO has a staff based political advocacy structure, apart from the MCW which adopted a voluntary based political advocacy structure to engage with the devolved institutions. Each of the FBOs with a staff based political advocacy structure increased its staffing capacity to engage with the devolved institutions.

As further powers have been devolved and become entrenched, the FBOs increased their capacity to engage. These findings are line with Keating's (2013:119) claim that the devolution of power from the centre to the sub-state level can induce pressure groups to follow suit and engage politically in the region. The Catholic Church of England and Wales has been induced to devolve autonomy to the sub-state level in response to policy divergence in education between Wales and England, underlining the effect political devolution has had on the organisation's political advocacy structure. The MCW has been mobilised in response to political devolution, developing a territorial, democratic and voluntary based political advocacy structure taking advantage of new opportunities to



engage politically at the sub-state level. Keating's (2013: 123) claim that sub-state governments encourage and even sponsor pressure groups to adapt to the sub-state level has therefore been confirmed in the case of Wales. Furthermore, Cytûn and the Church in Wales have increased their capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions.

It is also possible that Keating's 'identitarian' driver has also played a role in the case of Cytûn. As noted in Chapter 3, Keating (2013: 119-120) argues that an attachment to the region or a decentralist tradition or philosophy can act as a driver of adaptation at the sub-state level. The evidence suggests that Cytûn increased its capacity in 1999 because of its alignment to the territorial level and its tacit support for political devolution.

In summary, the FBOs selected for the case of Wales have diverse political advocacy structures. The majority of FBOs are territorial organisations with a high level of autonomy, while the Catholic Church has minimal autonomy at the sub-state level. Cytûn and the MCW are democratic organisations, while the Catholic Church is an elite led organisation with the Church in Wales balancing a democratic political advocacy structure with elite decision making. Finally, each FBO has a staff based political advocacy structure apart from the MCW. Each FBO has increased its capacity to take advantage of the opportunity to engage with the devolved political institutions.

### 5.2.3 Strategy: Findings

Following the examination of the political advocacy structures of FBOs in the previous section, this section analyses the second secondary research question, which asks:

'What type of strategies have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?'

The strategies adopted by the FBOs are investigated using the three policy areas presented in Chapter 4; education, the Human Transplantation (Wales) Act and constitutional issues. The section indicates that each FBO pursues an insider strategy, and supplement it with a responsible outsider strategy. Strongly rooted FBOs make the most extensive use of the responsible outsider strategy. Each FBO has specialist or core insider status conferred upon it. The strongly rooted FBOs utilise traditional resources such as education provision to secure this status, but the weakly rooted FBOs identify specific resources particularly desirable in the devolved context. Likewise, the Welsh Government's sponsored faith structure has provided access to the MCW which it might otherwise not receive.

#### 5.2.3.1. The Church in Wales

The Church in Wales pursues an insider strategy in each of the policy areas, supplementing this with a responsible outsider strategy where use is made of the media and public events. The outsider strategy is most apparent in relation to the Human Transplantation legislation and constitutional issues, and much less so in relation to education. The Church in Wales has specialist insider status conferred upon it in each policy area.

##### 5.2.3.1.1. Education

The Church in Wales provides education for 25,000 pupils in Wales across 172 primary and secondary schools (Church in Wales undated a), and is therefore an important part of the education landscape in Wales. The Archbishop of Wales speaks out publicly on issues associated with education (see WalesOnline 2012), but the bulk of the Church's engagement is pursued by the Church's Education Department which works with the Welsh Government's internal processes through insider means. There is a perception that at times

the Church receives peripheral treatment from the Welsh Government, but there is also evidence that the Church receives specialist insider status.

The Church's Education Division consists of the Provincial Education Officer who takes responsibility for national education policy, and the diocesan education officers based in each diocese (Church in Wales undated c). This Education Division engages by responding to government consultations, and giving evidence to Assembly committees.<sup>34</sup> The Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) are also important spaces where the Church in Wales has access, along with other FBOs set up in each local authority to design the religious education curriculum (see Ap Siôn 2014). The Church's capacity for engagement and access is also bolstered by working as part of a wider faith sector. In this respect, it has an ally in the Catholic Church with which it can work to defend the principle of faith education and lobby to ensure that the sector receives fair treatment from government and local authorities. A senior respondent from the Education Division noted how important it was for the sector to work together to defend faith schools in Wales.<sup>35</sup> By engaging on behalf of the sector the Church is able to bolster its position within the education landscape in Wales, and lobby for a number of common issues. For instance, the faith sector is represented on the Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> century schools programme board, providing it with an opportunity for the sector to argue for further provision from the state in terms of school buildings, on an equal basis with other stakeholders in education such as local authorities, further education colleges and government officials (21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Undated).

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with senior respondent, Church in Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Interview with senior respondent, Church in Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

The Church in Wales has a number of access points for engaging as an insider, but the political environment in Wales has not been as open to faith education as it has in England. New Labour pursued an agenda of faith education in England (Gardner 2005: 8), a policy continued by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government (Harrison 2010), but the Welsh Government has not been as open. According to a former senior Welsh Government Minister, this was a point of contention that was well aired in the Faith Communities Forum in the early years of the devolution process.<sup>36</sup> Likewise, the perception that faith education needed defending was clear in Archbishop Rowan Williams' Presidential Address on the issue in 2002 (Williams 2002). This averse atmosphere to faith education surfaced again in 2009 when Welsh Labour leadership candidate, Edwina Hart, expressed her wish for faith education in Wales to 'whither on the vine' (Shipton 2009).

The impression of a sometimes uneasy relationship between the Church in Wales and the Welsh Government was further bolstered by a senior respondent from the Church in Wales who noted that the Church does not get as close to the Welsh Government's decision making processes as he believed a statutory body should.<sup>37</sup> This would suggest that the status conferred upon the Church by the Welsh Government is somewhat peripheral. However, while this perception exists, the same respondent also gave the impression that the relationship between the Church and the Labour Welsh Government in the area of education had taken time to gel, with their working relationship improving over time.<sup>38</sup> There is also evidence that the Church's status is in reality closer to a specialist insider status. For instance, in 2011 the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church co-wrote a paper

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<sup>36</sup> Correspondence with former Welsh Government minister (June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

<sup>37</sup> Interview with senior respondent, Church in Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>38</sup> Interview with senior respondent, Church in Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

with the Welsh Government titled 'Faith in Wales' (Welsh Government 2011a) which clearly set out the role of the Church in Wales in education provision and in shaping the curriculum. By outlining the role of faith education, and presenting a number of examples of best practice found in faith schools, this document puts in writing the important contribution the faith sector makes to education, strengthening the sector's standing within education in Wales. Not only is the existence of the document a positive development for the Church in Wales, but its launch, fronted by the then Minister for Education Leighton Andrews and the Archbishop of Wales and Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff (see Morell 2011), also provided the Church with an excellent opportunity to display the sector publicly alongside the cabinet minister. Likewise, the Bishops noted in their evidence to the Silk Commission in 2013 that they saw the publication of the document as a sign of support from the Welsh Government (Church in Wales 2013: 4). The minister's acknowledgment at the conference that all sectors needed to be involved in raising school standards (Morell 2011) consolidated the place of the faith sector in education in Wales.

#### 5.2.3.1.2 The Human Transplantation (Wales) Act

The Church in Wales pursues an insider strategy supplemented by a responsible outsider strategy in the case of the Human Transplantation (Wales) Act, with its staff using the Welsh Government's internal consultation process to attempt to change the detail of the legislation while the Archbishop spoke publicly about his opposition to the legislation through the media. The evidence indicates that the Church in Wales received a specialist insider status in this area.

The Church in Wales' insider strategy was first pursued in coalition with the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Mission. The FBOs responded to the consultation on the Welsh

Government's White Paper in 2012. The White Paper notes that the families of the deceased would be 'involved in the decision making process around donation' (Welsh Government 2011b: 9) but the coalition argued: 'The law needs to state unambiguously whether, in the absence of an explicit statement of the wishes of the deceased, the relatives will be able to refuse permission for the removal of organs' (Church in Wales et al 2012). The Bishop's adviser for Church and Society continued to use the insider mechanism, giving more detailed evidence to the Assembly's Health and Social Committee in February 2013. The representative of the Church in Wales noted the Bishop's opposition to the principle, further underlining the role of the family (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 20).

The Bishop's adviser pursued this insider strategy, while the Archbishop of Wales pursued a responsible outsider strategy through the media, initiating a public debate which otherwise might not have happened. In defiance of the political establishment's support for the legislation, he argued before the Governing Body in his 2011 Presidential address that the legislation would create a situation where: 'our bodies are State assets and therefore at the State's disposal' (Morgan 2011b). This type of hyperbolic language was picked up by the media and covered extensively (see BBC News Wales 2011b, and WalesOnline 2011). The Archbishop continued to speak out publicly against the legislation until it was passed (see BBC News Wales 2013b). It is likely the Archbishop knew the legislation was not going to be repealed, but his responsible outsider strategy put pressure on the Welsh Government, while his adviser simultaneously pushed the role of the family through the insider strategy. This reflects Binderkrantz's (2005: 703) findings, that organisations will pressure decision makers through an outsider strategy while approaching decision makers directly through the insider strategy.

In April 2013, the Health Minister noted when responding to the questions of AMs that he wanted further discussions with faith communities regarding the role of the family (BBC News Wales 2013c). That same month, the minister announced that the role of the family would be strengthened in the legislation, referring to the Health and Social Care Committee's evidence as a reason for the amendment (BBC News Wales 2013c). The committee's report gave the evidence of the Bishop's Adviser as support for its recommendation regarding the role of the family (National Assembly for Wales 2013b: 58). Therefore, in terms of MacKay et al's (2005: 10) continuum of influence, the evidence suggests that the Church in Wales succeeded in changing the terms of the public debate, provoking reconsideration of the legislation and seeing concrete changes in policy outcomes.

#### 5.2.3.1.3 Constitutional Issues

The threshold strategy is also evident in the Church in Wales's engagement with constitutional issues. The Church has oscillated between an insider and responsible outsider strategy, submitting evidence to constitutional commissions and utilising an outsider strategy in its usage of the media and public events.

The Church in Wales gave evidence to the Richard commission via insider engagement through Cytûn (see Cytûn 2003), and then pursued an insider and a responsible outsider strategy in the continuing constitutional debate. Archbishop Barry Morgan then agreed to become the public face of 'Cymru Yfory', a civil society movement working to see the Richard Commission's recommendations implemented (see Morgan

2009).<sup>39</sup> Under Morgan's leadership, 'Cymru Yfory' briefed and lobbied Members of both Houses of Parliament when the Government of Wales Act was under consideration in 2005-6 (Morgan 2008:6). Morgan then used public opportunities to argue for moving from Part 3 of the Government of Wales Act to Part 4 (Morgan 2008) at a public lecture in Cardiff University in 2008 and again in a speech at the Senedd steps in 2009 when Cymru Yfory presented its petition in favour of primary law making powers (Morgan 2009: 7). In doing this, the Archbishop was able to offer an alternative dimension to the debate, with the Archbishop appearing as a leader above politics, ensuring his issue remained on the agenda.

The Church hierarchy continued its outsider strategy through its outspoken support for primary law making powers during the 2011 referendum campaign, joining political parties, third sector organisations and trade unions in the 'Yes for Wales' campaign. The Church's support disgruntled the 'No' campaign, 'True Wales', which stated on a prominent display outside its launch that the organisation demanded a reform of all tiers of government in Wales and an end to the 'undemocratic influence of the Church hierarchy' (see Wyn Jones and Scully 2012: 213). Those opposed to primary law making powers evidently saw the Church as playing an influential role in the campaign, setting them aside from other third sector organisations for specific criticism (see Wyn-Jones and Scully 2012: 102).

The Archbishop's use of the responsible outsider strategy is linked to the role's ability to attract media attention in a way other FBO leaders cannot. Since the election of

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<sup>39</sup> It is unclear whether the Archbishop headed the organisation in a personal capacity or in his capacity as Archbishop. The way Morgan discussed his role in his 2015 Presidential Address at the Governing Body gives the impression it was as Archbishop (see Morgan 2015). Furthermore, it is worth noting that a spokesperson representing the Church in Wales defended the Archbishop's work with Cymru Yfory when it was criticised by David Jones MP (see Shipton 2015a) giving the impression that it was done in his capacity as Archbishop. Either way, it is difficult to separate the individual from the role of the Archbishop.



Glyn Simon to the position of Archbishop in 1968, the Church has chosen its Archbishop on his potential as a leader, rather than on seniority (Walker 1976: 177), and this has also continued after 1999. As this trend has developed, the role of the Archbishop has come to be seen as a political role. The Archbishop of Wales' ability to attract media attention may also come from what some have called the 'vestiges of establishment' (see Doe 2004: 107), whereby the Church enjoys a particular status in Wales, despite being disestablished. It would also seem that 'the Bishop' still plays an important role in the minds of Welsh citizens and journalists. This could be due to the anglicised nature of Wales' media consumption. It is also much easier for the press to approach a figure such as a bishop who remains in the role for a long period of time, building a reputation for himself, than it is to approach the moderator or president of a denomination which changes on an annual basis. This status, combined with the assistance of his staff, enables the Archbishop to receive a high level of media coverage.

Since 2011, the Church has continued to engage with constitutional issues through an insider approach. The Church's evidence to the Silk Commission, intimating that the Assembly does not have enough members to carry out its scrutiny role, and the problems with a centrally administered civil service was cited in part 2 of the Commission's report (Commission on Devolution in Wales 2014: 154, 164, 175). This was followed by support for a reserved powers model in the Bishops' evidence to the Assembly's Constitutional and Legal Affairs Committee's inquiry into the Draft Wales Bill in 2015 (Bishops of the Church in Wales 2015).

In summary, the Church in Wales has utilised a thresholder strategy, pursuing both an insider and outsider strategy in its engagement with constitutional issues in Wales. There

is no direct evidence that the Church has influenced the development of the constitutional settlement in Wales, but the evidence does suggest that the Church, through the Archbishop, has been an important voice in civil society for the pursuit of constitutional change since 1999. In terms of MacKay et al's (2005: 10) continuum, the Archbishop was recognised as a legitimate voice and at the very least challenged the public debate which led to a reconsideration of Wales' devolved settlement.

#### 5.2.3.2 The Catholic Church in England and Wales

The Catholic Church pursues an insider strategy in each policy area. It also utilises the responsible outsider strategy to some extent when engaging on the Human Transplantation legislation and on constitutional issues. The Catholic Church has specialist insider status conferred upon it by decision makers.

##### 5.2.3.2.1 Education

The Catholic Church is a provider of education for 30,549 pupils across 91 primary and secondary schools in Wales (Catholic Education Service undated a) and therefore makes up the second half of the 'faith sector' in education in Wales. It utilises its Bishops and Wales based communications officer to speak out on issues related to education, but the bulk of its engagement is done through an insider strategy of responding to consultations and meeting with ministers. The Catholic Church has specialist insider status conferred upon it by decision makers.

The Catholic Church avidly engages with Welsh Government consultations, presenting detailed evidence on a regular basis. Interviews with CES staff based in London suggest that the service sees the consultation process as an important part of engaging with the legislature and executive, noting that giving evidence at an early stage minimises

problems in the legislation at a later stage.<sup>40</sup> With staff members responsible for education in Wales located in London until 2015, it is no surprise that written consultations have been its main access point. However, the Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) at local authority level are also important spaces where the Catholic Church has access (see Ap Siôn 2014).

However, the Catholic Church also utilises some measure of a responsible outsider strategy. Monsignor Robert Reardon, a parish priest in South Wales, acts as the Church's Communications Officer in Wales, and is used regularly to respond to the media on issues related to education such as the cost of school transport (Servini 2013). Similarly, the communications officer defends Catholic education (see WalesOnline 2011), as seen in its response when Edwina Hart questioned the future of faith education at the Welsh Labour leadership hustling in 2009 (see Shipton 2009).

The Bishops of the Catholic Church in Wales are also utilised in the Church's wider strategy. The CES took part in co-writing the 'Faith in Education' document with the Welsh Government and the Church in Wales (Welsh Government 2011a). The Archbishop of Cardiff, George Stack, then represented the Church at the 'Faith in Education' conference along with the director of the CES (Morrell 2011). The Archbishop's public appearance alongside the education minister and the Archbishop of Wales serves to underline the role of faith education in Wales, and consolidates its position as a key partner in education in Wales.

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with senior respondent from CES (11<sup>th</sup> February 2015).

The Catholic Church predominantly engages with education through an insider strategy, but at times uses a responsible outsider strategy. The Catholic Church has specialist insider status conferred upon it in return.

#### 5.2.3.2.2 The Human Transplantation (Wales) Act

The Catholic Church utilised an insider strategy in relation to the Human Transplantation legislation, working with other FBOs to challenge the legislation. It supplemented this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy, but it was a much softer outsider strategy than that utilised by the Archbishop of Wales, with the Catholic Church relying to a greater extent on an insider strategy of submitting specialist research during the consultation process.

As noted previously, the Catholic Church in Wales worked in coalition with the Church in Wales and the Orthodox Mission to respond to the Welsh Government's White Paper in 2012. In this joint evidence the churches highlighted the need to strengthen the role of the family in the legislation (Church in Wales et al 2012). However, the Catholic Church also engaged with the legislative process beyond this coalition response, utilising its England and Wales structure to draw on Catholic based expertise from outside Wales. The Anscombe Bioethics Centre, an apex group within the Catholic Church, created by the Archbishop of England and Wales in 1977 to 'serve' the Church on bioethical issues (Anscombe Bioethics Centre undated) gave evidence to both Westminster's Welsh Affairs committee in February 2011 and the Assembly's Health and Social Care Committee in February 2013. The Anscombe centre tackled issues such as the family and ante-mortem donations in the legislation. The centre recommended to the Health and Social Care Committee that the legislation needed 'an explicit requirement to consult relatives and a

right for relatives to object where there is no evidence of prior express consent by the deceased' (Anscombe Bioethics Centre 2013).

As noted previously, in April 2013, the Health Minister, Mark Drakeford, announced that the legislation would be amended so as to provide a clear right of objection by which the family can confirm that a potential donor would not have wished the donation to take place. The legislation still puts the onus on the family to provide evidence that the deceased did not want to donate, but it was brought closer to the recommendations of the Catholic Church's wishes, as expressed through both the joint consultation to the White Paper and the evidence given to the Health and Social Care Committee by the Anscombe Centre for Bioethics. The Catholic Church was not the only organisation calling for this change, but the Centre's position ended up as a committee recommendation and acted upon by the Minister (National Assembly for Wales 2013b: 72). However, it is worth noting that while the committee noted the centre's concerns regarding ante-mortem procedures, it was not persuaded to make a recommendation to the Minister on this basis (see Anscombe Centre for Bioethics 2013 and National Assembly for Wales 2013b: 121).

The Church in Wales supplemented its insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy through the Archbishop of Wales, but the Catholic Church's outsider engagement was much more muted. The Archbishop of Cardiff spoke out against the legislation with the Archbishop of Wales and Archimandrite of the Orthodox Church in 2012 (BBC News Wales 2012a), and signed a joint public letter asking for the family amendment (Catholic Church in England and Wales 2013), but Archbishop George Stack was not as prominent in the public debate as Archbishop Barry Morgan.

The Catholic Church pursued an insider strategy in response to the Human Transplantation legislation, with some minimal responsible outsider activity. The evidence suggests that the Catholic Church received specialist insider status in return. In terms of MacKay et al's (2005: 10) continuum, the Catholic Church has had a legitimate voice in the policy process and in all likelihood challenged the way the Government thought about the legislation and potentially succeeded in influencing concrete changes in policy.

#### 5.2.3.2.3 Constitutional Issues

The Catholic Church in Wales has utilised a threshold strategy when engaging with constitutional issues. It has provided evidence through insider means to both the Richard Commission and the All Wales Convention. The Bishops of the Catholic Church in Wales have not been nearly as visible or prominent as the Archbishop of Wales, but they have also pursued an outsider strategy through use of the media and sending letters to parishioners ahead of referendums.

The Bishops of the Catholic Church in Wales did not publicly support political devolution in 1997, but engaged with the issues in an outsider fashion by presenting a letter to Parishioners written with the assistance of the Church's communications officer and Professor John Loughlin underlining the compatibility between devolution and Catholic social teaching (Loughlin 2001). While some in the Church thought its engagement with the devolution referendum was too 'muted' (Dixon 2001), the Church engaged in more detail with the question of Wales' devolution settlement in joint evidence to the Richard Commission with Cytûn's other member churches in 2004 (Cytûn 2003). This insider engagement continued with the Catholic Bishops presenting evidence to the All Wales Convention in 2009. With the assistance of Professor Loughlin, the Bishops set out their

support, not only for the principle of devolution, but for primary law making powers for Wales, which they argued was fully in line with the Catholic Church's principle of subsidiarity (Loughlin 2009). The Catholic Bishops then returned to their outsider engagement during the 2011 referendum, sending another public letter to parishioners ahead of the referendum on primary law making powers. The Bishops were careful to ensure they did not tell parishioners how to vote in the referendum, but the letter read:

we broadly support the principle of improving the functioning of the Assembly and point out that this would be in line with the principle of subsidiarity found in Catholic social teaching. We would welcome measures to improve the Assembly's decision-making process. We would also welcome a strengthening of the democratic legitimacy of the National Assembly and any measures to increase the accountability of the politicians elected to the assembly. (BBC News Wales 2011a)

The 'No' campaign responded by condemning the letter as 'inappropriate' (BBC News Wales 2011a), which indicates that some saw the Church's interjection as influential. Therefore, while the Catholic Bishops have been much more muted than the Archbishop of Wales in the way they have engaged with constitutional issues, they have engaged in both an insider and a responsible outsider fashion, providing evidence to constitutional commissions as well as providing guidance for their parishioners on how to vote in both the 1997 and 2011 referendums.

#### 5.2.3.3 Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales

Cytûn pursues an insider strategy, supplementing this to a certain extent with the responsible outsider strategy in the area of constitutional issues. Acting as a facilitator between Christian denominations and decision makers, and at times between the faith

sector and decision makers, Cytûn has specialist insider status conferred upon it by decision makers at the devolved level.

#### 5.2.3.3.1 Education

Cytûn engages in education through an insider strategy, attempting to facilitate the representation of Christian denominations, particularly those which do not provide statutory education. In doing this, Cytûn presented itself as a facilitator which decision makers recognised as an important part of the non-statutory faith education sector, and hence receives specialist insider status.

As noted in Chapter 2, Cytûn does not hold its own positions, but instead seeks to encourage its affiliated members to come to a common position (Davies 2008: 95). Representatives from Cytûn also noted that the organisation seeks to explain the nuances and differences in the denominations' political positions to government.<sup>41</sup> In the area of education, Cytûn seeks to portray the views of Christian denominations which do not provide statutory education. A respondent noted in an interview how it did this in the case of the education curriculum:

recently we were in a meeting with the WJEC, where we had to, on the one hand say this is what the Catholic Church feels, this is what the Church in Wales thinks – they were in the room to say it themselves. What we were saying at the same time was, this is the view of the Free Churches which do not provide education, but they would emphasise these priorities.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with respondents from Cytûn (January 8<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>42</sup> Interview with respondents from Cytûn (January 8<sup>th</sup> 2015).



Cytûn attempts to facilitate the relationship between the Christian denominations and the National Assembly and Welsh Government as a liaison between the institutions. This gives Cytûn access to the Welsh Government, as a voice on faith education (see Misstear 2012). For instance, the Chief Executive of Cytûn, Aled Edwards, was invited by the Welsh Government to speak at the launch of the 'Faith in Education' document. Taking questions alongside the then Education Minister Leighton Andrews, the Archbishop of Wales, the Catholic Bishop of Wrexham and the Chief Executive of CES (Morell 2011), Cytûn was in a position to make the other denominations visible, and to be seen as possibly a more minor, yet third stakeholder in faith education in Wales. As a representative of the Faith Communities Forum, Cytûn's policy officer also sits on the education department's 'Strategic Stakeholder Group' which has been given responsibility of shaping the new 'religion, philosophy and ethics' curriculum proposed by the Welsh Government in response to Lord Donaldson's review of the curriculum (Rhys 2016).

In acting as a 'facilitator' between the Welsh Government and the Christian denominations which do not provide education, Cytûn pursues an insider strategy and receives a specialist insider status in return, as it is recognised as what MacKay et al (2005: 10) refer to as a 'legitimate voice' by decision makers.

#### 5.2.3.3.2 Human Transplantation (Wales) Act

Cytûn pursued an insider strategy in relation to the Human Transplantation legislation, giving oral evidence to the Assembly's Health and Social Care Committee in 2013. Again, Cytûn acted as a link between its affiliated members and decision makers, attempting to communicate the Christian denominations' varying positions. However in this policy area, Cytûn's role went beyond explaining its member's positions, to helping decision makers

liaise with non-Christian faith communities too. This further bolstered Cytûn's specialist insider status.

The Human Transplantation (Wales) Act was controversial among many faith communities (Blake 2015). Some of Cytûn's members were actively in favour of the legislation, but others were vehemently opposed to it. This gave Cytûn an opportunity to explain the nuanced positions amongst its members. A respondent from Cytûn explained: 'Our role in the dynamic was to remind the Assembly...and to filter through to the government, the complexity of the issue'.<sup>43</sup> Cytûn used the Assembly's eagerness to consult with faith communities to ensure it was part of this process. This was particularly evident when a range of FBOs gave evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee in 2013 (see National Assembly for Wales 2013a). Cytûn's Chief Executive and its Policy Officer attended the evidence session with the Bishop's Adviser for the Church in Wales, the President of the Methodist Synod in Wales and the General Secretary of the MCW. While these FBO leaders gave their own evidence, Cytûn's Chief Executive and Policy Officer acted as chairpersons, presenting the FBOs (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 15), and adding to their comments. The Policy Officer even provided the Muslim and Jewish 'view' at one point in his evidence (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 16). Aled Edward's capacity as Chief Executive of Cytûn and Chair of the Inter-faith Council also allowed him to present the organisation as not only a liaison between the Christian denominations and the Welsh Government, but as an agent of the faith sector in its wider sense.

By staying above the fray, not taking an explicit position itself, Cytûn could claim to be useful to both faith communities and to the Assembly, and in turn

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with respondents from Cytûn (January 8<sup>th</sup> 2015).

consolidate its position within the sub-state political system. The Chair of the committee's gratitude for the 'help' Cytûn and the other representatives provided in enlightening the committee on a 'deep and complex issue' (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 29) suggests that Cytûn was perceived as an important resource in this area.

#### 5.2.3.3.3 Constitutional Issues

As in the policy areas discussed above, Cytûn pursues an insider strategy in relation to constitutional issues. However, through its Chief Executive, Cytûn also engages with constitutional issues through an outsider strategy. It is not always clear when the Chief Executive is working in a personal capacity or representing Cytûn, but the media often perceives this public engagement to be in the name of Cytûn.

Cytûn did not take a public position in favour of devolution in 1997 (Davies 2008: 94-95), but since 1999 the organisation's engagement on constitutional questions has advocated further devolution. This can be seen in the evidence it provided to the Richard Commission in 2003. As was noted in the findings pertaining to the Catholic Church, Cytûn's engagement with the Richard Commission brought representatives from each of its affiliated members together to give evidence. Cytûn's evidence was careful to note the difference in opinion amongst its members, but it welcomed the separation of the legislature and the executive, noted that greater powers would lead to more coherence in Assembly activity and that the Assembly should receive tax raising powers in the future (Cytûn 2003). Despite having a political advocacy structure which inhibits Cytûn from having too definite a position, its response contributed a number of recommendations to the Commission in an insider manner.

Furthermore, in 2009 Cytûn's General Secretary, Aled Edwards, represented the 'Faith Forum' on the All Wales Convention (Williamson 2008). This was another opportunity for a representative of Cytûn to take part in an insider fashion through a government established constitutional commission. Edwards was not on the board to give Cytûn's opinion on Wales' constitutional future, but his selection as the representative of the 'Faith Forum' further placed Cytûn as the representative of the faith sector as it took one of twelve civil society places on the convention (see Williamson 2008).

Edwards has also engaged with Wales' constitutional debate through a responsible outsider strategy, using the media. In 2015, he led a group of civil society representatives who called upon the UK government to make seven key changes to the Draft Wales Bill, drafted in response to the Silk Commission's findings (Shipton 2015b). Edwards was probably engaging in a personal capacity, but it was reported in the media that 'Canon Aled Edwards, Chief Executive of Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales' was leading the group (Shipton 2015b), and hence the stunt was connected directly to Cytûn as an organisation. As a public figure, Edwards' work and activities are often connected to Cytûn, whether his actions represent the organisation or not.

The evidence indicates that Cytûn mainly engages with constitutional issues through an insider strategy, with its Chief Executive engaging in an outsider fashion at times. This outsider engagement may not be strictly pursued in Cytûn's name, but it is often attributed to the organisation.

#### 5.2.3.4 The Muslim Council of Wales

The MCW pursues an insider strategy in each policy area and has utilised the responsible outsider strategy on constitutional affairs to a certain extent. Because decision makers

identify the MCW as the representative of the Muslim community in Wales it has specialist insider status conferred upon it by decision makers.

#### 5.2.3.4.1 Education

The MCW engages in education through an insider strategy. The Council does not have statutory status in education, but it is consulted by the government. However, the MCW is also active outside of statutory education, working with the Welsh Government to provide community and leadership education as part of the Welsh Government's anti-radicalisation strategy. It does not hold the same level of specialist insider status in education policy as the other FBOs under study, but its role as a representative of the Muslim community selected to roll out part of the Government's anti-extremism strategy gives it unique specialist insider status.

The MCW has engaged with education policy, on issues such as the religious education curriculum and sex education (Muslim Council of Wales undated c). A respondent from the Council noted that this tends to be done orally, with the minister approaching the Council to ask advice on how the community's view may differ to the faith communities which are consulted on a statutory basis.<sup>44</sup> For instance, a former government minister noted the role of the Faith Communities Forum in ensuring the Muslim community understood the Government's education policy and for discussion in this policy area.<sup>45</sup>

There is also some evidence of the MCW speaking out publicly on the religious education curriculum. When the former Education Minister, Huw Lewis, proposed combining religion with philosophy and ethics as part of a wider strategy of overcoming

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<sup>44</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>45</sup> Correspondence with former Welsh Government minister (June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

extremism in Wales, the Chief Executive of the MCW, noted that a ‘better understanding’ of the ‘similarities and values’ of different faiths could be taught through effective religious education (Evans 2015).

The MCW may engage with statutory education policy to a lesser extent than the other FBOs under study, but its wider engagement with the Welsh Government’s anti-extremism strategy has meant that it has had substantial involvement with community education. For instance, the role of the MCW was noted in this area in the ‘Faith in Education’ document published in 2011. The document noted good practice between Wales’ faith communities, with the MCW, amongst other FBOs, noted for their work in the Welsh Government’s ‘Getting On Together Project’, aimed at countering extremism in schools (Welsh Government 2011a: 24, Ap Siôn and Francis 2014: 279). The MCW has also received funding as part of the Welsh Government’s ‘Prevent’ work. This has included the ‘Adfywiad’ project, providing training for Muslim leaders to address the risks of radicalisation within their communities by developing good governance structures within their institutions and a better understanding of radicalisation and extremism, as well as how to counter it (see Welsh Government 2012b: 5-8, Robinson et al 2012). The MCW also ran the ‘ILead’ project, providing citizenship and leadership training for young people within the community (see Robertson et al 2012, Reflections 2011a: 8-9).

The MCW does not have a specialist insider role in statutory education, but its role in community education, underlines its unique specialist insider status in education within the government’s anti-radicalisation strategy. The Board which selected the MCW for this work, which is chaired by the Association of Chief Police Officers Cymru and the Welsh Government (see Welsh Assembly Government 2009: 40-41), justified its choice by

underlining how the Council provided access to ‘a wide variety of audiences’ (Welsh Government 2012b: 5). While this status is challenged by some key actors within the Muslim community,<sup>46</sup> it suggests that the Welsh Government perceives the council as the representative of the Muslim Community in Wales and as an important insider which provides access to a community which is difficult to reach. In this respect, the MCW receives unique specialist insider status.

#### 5.2.3.4.2 Human Transplantation (Wales) Act

The MCW pursued an insider strategy when engaging with the Human Transplantation legislation by taking part in consultation with the Welsh Government, and providing oral evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee in 2013. The Council noted that it would like to see the role of the family strengthened in the legislation, but its priority was to argue against the principle of the legislation. The Council did not achieve this, but its concerns were quoted in the committee’s report, which suggests that the Council was seen as the representative of the Muslim community in this regard.

The MCW engaged with the Human Transplantation legislation by engaging in an insider fashion through the legislature and the executive. The Council co-signed a public letter against the legislation with other faith leaders (see Catholic Church in England and Wales 2013), but its public engagement was minimal.

At an early stage in the legislative process, the Council discussed the Bill at the Faith Communities Forum, where it had the opportunity to voice its concerns (BBC News Wales 2012b). Following this, as noted previously the MCW gave oral evidence to the Assembly’s

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with key informant within the Muslim community in Wales (January 12<sup>th</sup> 2015).

Health and Social Care committee. Here, the Chief Executive presented the Council as the representative of the Muslim community in Wales:

I would humbly request, on behalf of the Muslim community in Wales, that you reconsider the concept of presumed or deemed consent. I believe that it may have a negative impact on our communities and instead of increasing organ donors, it may decrease the number. I also suggest that resources may be provided to raise awareness among our communities. (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 19)

The Council's insider approach was far stronger in its opposition to the Bill, than found in the evidence given by the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church. The Chief Executive notes that an increased role for the family would be appreciated, but he is adamant in his evidence that the legislation should not go ahead, noting:

If it is specifically mentioned that family consent will be taken, that would soften it, but it would not change the concept of presumed consent, and 'presumed' is the word that we are disagreeing with. What I mentioned is that, if the law has to be made, then mandated choice consent would be better than presumed consent, because that means that people would at least be making choices. (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 24)

Here, the Council does not prioritise amending the legislation, but rather seeks an end to its legislative journey. The MCW was not successful in this endeavour, but decision makers were keen to ensure its voice was heard, with the Health and Social Care Committee referencing the Council's concerns in its report (National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 28, 58,



97). This suggests that the MCW had specialist insider status conferred upon it as a representative of the Muslim Community, with what MacKay et al (2005: 10) refer to as a 'legitimate voice' in the policy process, despite not seeing the legislation repealed.

#### 5.2.3.4.3 Constitutional Issues.

The MCW has engaged with constitutional issues through both an insider and outsider strategy. As the Council has become more involved in constitutional discussions, it has also consolidated its insider status within the Welsh political system.

The MCW has been engaging with Wales' constitutional settlement since its mobilisation. The Council's short, but positive, experience of political devolution led it to give evidence to the Richard Commission in May 2003 (see Richard Commission 2004).<sup>47</sup> The MCW has also engaged with constitutional issues through a responsible outsider strategy, campaigning publicly for primary law making powers for Wales as part of the referendum's 'Yes' campaign. The Council actively campaigned within the Muslim community, giving out flyers encouraging Muslims to vote 'Yes' (Muslim Council of Wales undated d, Reflection 2011b: 2, Whittaker 2015: 18). The Council argued that Muslims should vote in favour of primary law making powers because of the benefits it had brought to the community since 1999 and because voting 'Yes' would give minorities a stronger voice (Muslim Council of Wales undated d).

The Muslim community's involvement with the 'Yes' Campaign was encouraged by political elites who were keen to ensure that the devolution process gives a civic and inclusive image by including minorities such as the Muslim community.<sup>48</sup> The Muslim community in Wales may not be large, but the engagement of the MCW sent an important

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<sup>47</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>48</sup> Interview with former politician involved in the 'Yes for Wales' campaign (February 17<sup>th</sup> 2015).

message that devolution, and Wales' political establishment are inclusive. As Whittaker (2015:17) has suggested, the MCW speaking out publicly in favour of devolution was 'symbolic' of an inclusive space for minorities within participatory politics in Wales.

This outsider engagement has continued beyond 2011. The Council's Chief Executive, was one of Aled Edwards' signatories asking for the UK Government to make seven key changes to the Draft Wales Bill in 2015 (Shipton 2015b). This was another opportunity for the MCW to engage with Wales' constitutional settlement, but it was also another opportunity for the MCW to consolidate its place as a key part of civil society in Wales.

The MCW has engaged with constitutional issues as both an insider and as a responsible outsider. The evidence suggests that this engagement furthered the Council's specialist insider credentials, as it has consolidated itself within civil society in Wales, and has been seen by Wales' political elite as an attribute to the political devolution process and the constitutional debate.

#### 5.2.4 Strategy: Analysis

This section analyses the findings in regards to FBO strategy. First, the strategy utilised by the FBOs is analysed, followed by the status conferred upon the FBO by decision makers. Each FBO in the Wales case study has pursued an insider strategy. This indicates that FBOs perceive Wales' political system as open for engagement. Strongly rooted organisations actively supplemented this with a responsible outsider strategy in a number of high profile cases, with weakly rooted organisations making less use of the responsible outsider strategy, but nevertheless employing it at times. The use of the responsible outsider strategy through the media is connected to two main factors. Firstly, FBOs with the staff capacity to engage with the media use this strategy most prolifically. Secondly, in line with

Binderkrantz's (2005: 710) claim, FBOs supplement their insider strategy with an outsider strategy when the position they have taken is controversial or if they foresee the position will receive a high level of opposition from government decision makers or public opinion. The findings also provide a number of examples of coalition building which is found in salient policy areas, where there is conflict between interests and in order to share internal resources and reach common goals.

The FBOs which supplement their insider strategies with outsider strategies the most are those with the capacity to take advantage of public and media opportunities. This is clearest in the case of the Church in Wales and its Archbishop. As a recognisable figurehead in Wales, the Archbishop can attract media attention, using it to shape the public debate. Archbishop Barry Morgan did this in the case of both the Human Transplantation legislation and on Wales' constitutional settlement. Likewise, the Bishops of the Catholic Church, while not possessing as formidable a status as that of the Archbishop of Wales, have used their position to speak out on constitutional issues and on the Human Transplantation legislation. The more weakly rooted organisations have not been as visible in their responsible outsider engagement, but both Cytûn and the MCW have supplemented their insider engagement with a responsible outsider strategy at times.

The responsible outsider strategy is utilised when the position taken is controversial, or when the FBO perceives opposition to its position. This can be seen in the way that the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church consistently utilise an insider strategy in education, apart from when they feel faith education is under threat. Furthermore, a responsible outsider strategy has been used extensively by the Church in Wales and to some extent the Catholic Church in controversial policy areas. For instance, with a large majority of the

political elite in Cardiff Bay supporting the Human Transplantation legislation, the Archbishop of Wales used a high profile responsible outsider strategy to challenge what was perceived by many as a settled matter. Likewise, the Archbishop of Wales' position on Wales' constitutional settlement was far more radical than many of the political elite when the Richard Commission was published in 2004, and hence he chose to take part in a high profile campaign as the figurehead of Cymru Yfory, to push for further powers for the National Assembly for Wales.

The evidence does not suggest that roots in society have influenced whether the FBOs in the case of Wales have pursued an insider strategy. Conversely, roots in society appear to influence the extent to which FBOs in Wales have supplemented this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy. FBOs with deeper roots in Welsh society have used a responsible outsider strategy to a greater extent than weakly rooted FBOs, most likely because they have the capacity and status with which to do so.

The evidence also provides a number of examples of coalition building. Coalition building occurs in both salient policy areas, where there is conflict between interests, and in order to share internal resources and reach common goals. The Human Transplantation legislation was a highly salient issue, and the Church in Wales, the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Mission responded to a consultation with a joint position. Following this, Cytûn, the Church in Wales, the Methodist Church and the MCW jointly gave evidence to the Assembly's Health and Social Care Committee. Finally, an even wider group of FBOs signed an open letter against the legislation, asking for the Government to bolster the role of the family in the legislation. Working together in this way strengthened the FBOs position against the legislation. This example of coalition furthers scholars' claims that organisations

form coalitions on salient issues (Mahoney and Baumgartner 2004) or issues which are likely to cause conflict between interests (Heinz et al 1993, Mahoney 2007). However, the evidence also provides an example of coalition building in order to share internal resources and reach common goals on less salient issues such as education. The Church in Wales and the Catholic Church work together as the faith sector in education in order to pursue the common goal of maintaining and furthering faith education. This therefore backs the claims of scholars that argue coalitions are brokered so as to share internal resources and to work for common goals (Hula 1999, Whitford 2003, Mahoney and Baumgartner 2004).

Each of the FBOs in the Welsh case have received specialist insider status to differing extents in each of the policy areas. The evidence suggests that the FBOs with the stronger roots in Welsh society have received this level of access on the basis of the specific resources they possess. This can be seen most clearly in the case of education. The Church in Wales and the Catholic Church receive a high level of access to decision making in education, as evidenced in their role on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools board and in co-writing the 'Faith in Education' document with the education minister. This is down to the specific resources they possess in education, providing thousands of school places across hundreds of schools in Wales. Here, the FBOs have what Maloney et al (1994: 29) refer to as the specific resource of 'implementation power'. Likewise, with the Human Transplantation legislation, the views of the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church were taken seriously, with the Assembly's Health and Social Care Committee and the Minister recognising them as legitimate voices and important stakeholders in the discussion. Here the FBOs have the specific resources of 'knowledge' and 'technical expertise' with the Human Transplantation legislation and on constitutional issues (Maloney et al 1994: 29).

Likewise, the weakly rooted FBOs have ensured they receive specialist insider status by identifying specific resources which decision makers desire. Here, Cytûn and the MCW might be seen to provide what Maloney et al (1994: 29) categorise as ‘a representative base’ as well as ‘knowledge’ and ‘technical expertise’. The evidence indicates that Cytûn, positioning itself as a facilitator of the Christian denominations, and in some cases as a facilitator of the faith sector, is attractive to the Welsh Government and Assembly, as it acts as a voice that can clarify the position of Christian denominations or the faith sector. This was most evident with the Human Transplantation legislation, but also evident in its engagement with education and constitutional issues. The ability to do this consolidates Cytûn’s position as a specialist insider. Likewise, the MCW’s ability to represent the Muslim view to decision makers ensures it has specialist insider status conferred upon it by the Welsh Government and the National Assembly. This was seen in each of the policy areas, with the Council providing the decision makers with the ability to consult the community and in doing so to demonstrate inclusivity. These resources may be less tangible than school provision, but are nevertheless important in a devolved context with the concept of ‘inclusivity’ imprinted in its DNA (Chaney 2011: 73). The Faith Communities Forum is also an important space which enhances the MCW’s ability to gain access to decision makers, as the representative of the Muslim community, sitting alongside the more traditional faith community leaders in Wales, with direct access to the First Minister.

### 5.2.5 Effectiveness

Having examined the political advocacy structures and strategies of the FBOs under study, this section examines whether the FBOs are well placed to act as effective pressure groups.

This is done in relation to the third secondary research question outlined in Chapter 4, which asks:

‘Are faith-based organisations at the sub-state level in the UK well placed to act as effective pressure groups in the decision making process?’

The secondary research question is analysed using the criterion of effectiveness outlined in Chapter 4. The section indicates that each FBO is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. However, the specific resources the strongly rooted FBO possess ensure their continued specialist or core insider status, while the weakly rooted FBOs are more reliant on decision makers continuing to recognise them as representative of their respective community for this status to continue.

#### 5.2.5.1 The Church in Wales

The Church in Wales is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. It has an appropriate political advocacy structure, coherent policy positions, it is consulted widely, has core or specialist insider status conferred upon it and has succeeded in seeing a number of its objectives met.

The Church’s political advocacy structure is appropriate for engaging at the sub-state level in Wales. Having increasing its staff capacity to engage with the devolved institutions, the Church has utilised its staff for insider engagement while its Bishops and Archbishop can engage in an outsider fashion. This is an effective political advocacy structure which equips the Church to engage in the detail of legislation, while the Archbishop uses his status to shape opinion through the media, as seen in the case of the Human Transplantation legislation. This political advocacy structure and strategy is well suited for a devolved

context with an emphasis on policy consultation (Cairney 2008: 361, Chaney 2011: 263, 268), where organisations are required to be 'well-resourced and skilled' (Day 2006: 651) and where civil society is considered to be weak (see Chaney 2011: 215-216), providing an opportunity to shape the debate.

The Church's effectiveness is heightened further by the Bishops' ability to articulate a message through the media means that the Bishops' policy positions are coherent and well-articulated. For instance, the Church successfully articulated a message against the Human Transplantation legislation in public while presenting a more nuanced position through its insider strategy. In this case, the Church presented its position differently, yet coherently, to both audiences. With regards to being consulted by decision makers, the findings indicate that the Church in Wales is consulted by the Welsh Government and is seen as an important stakeholder beyond these consultations. Likewise, the Church receives a specialist or core insider status in each policy area.

Finally, the Church has seen many of its outcomes met. For instance, the Church has successfully defended faith education in Wales, consolidating its role through the 'Faith in Education' document. The Church did not succeed in ending the passage of the Human Transplantation legislation, but it succeeded in having its voice heard, presenting a high profile case against the legislation, in defiance of widespread support for the legislation. Further to this, it is likely that the Church was at least partly responsible for the Government strengthening the role of the family in the final legislation. The evidence also suggests that the Church, through the Archbishop, was an important voice within civil society in the campaign for further devolution. In terms of Mackay et al's (2005: 10) continuum of influence, the Church has been recognised as a 'legitimate voice', has 'changed the terms of



the public debate’ and has seen some ‘concrete changes in policy outcomes’. In light of the criteria, the Church in Wales is well placed to act as an effective pressure group.

#### 5.2.5.2 The Catholic Church in England and Wales

The Catholic Church is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. Despite not having as appropriate a political advocacy structure as it might, the Catholic Church has coherent policy positions, is widely consulted, has had specialist or core insider status conferred upon it and has seen a number of its objectives met.

Having only devolved a limited amount of power to the sub-state level, the Church does not have as appropriate a political advocacy structure as it could have, making it more challenging for the Church to engage with decision makers. Despite this, the findings show that it is effective as it is able to draw on its centric political advocacy structure for expertise that it can use in consultation processes, as seen in the case of the Human Transplantation legislation. Likewise, the Church has increased its capacity in education as it has perceived an increase in divergence within education policy, and noted that it would consider increasing its capacity if areas of interest were devolved in future. Despite lacking some capacity for insider engagement, it does use its bishops for responsible outsider engagement in the region. Its political advocacy structure is not as developed as it could be, but it does allow it significant opportunities for engagement.

The Church’s centralised political advocacy structure ensures that its policy positions are coherent, as they are clearly formed and articulated through the Bishops’ Conference. This was seen in its support for the role of the family in the Human Transplantation legislation. In each of the policy areas under study, the Catholic Church has been consulted by decision makers, regarded a stakeholder in education and well received by the Health

and Social Care committee with the Human Transplantation legislation. The Church's effectiveness is heightened due to its specialist insider status in each policy area under study. This was exemplified in education with the 'Faith in Wales' document and with the Human Transplantation legislation where the Church was recognised as a 'legitimate voice' (MacKay et al's 2005: 10). In terms of seeing its desired policy outcomes met, the Church in all likelihood saw 'concrete changes in policy' output through influencing the amendment made to the Human Transplantation legislation regarding the role of family. It is also likely that the Church's support for political devolution in Wales has had some influence on the 'terms of the public debate'. The Catholic Church has some weaknesses in its political advocacy structure, but it is well placed to act as an effective pressure group

#### 5.2.5.3 Cytûn

Cytûn is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. It presents coherent policy positions to decision makers, is widely consulted, has had specialist or core insider status conferred upon it and has seen a number of its objectives met.

Cytûn's political advocacy structure is effective due to its appropriateness for the devolved context in which it engages. Its use of a policy officer to provide representation for a wide range of Christian denominations and at times a wide range of faith communities works well in a devolved context with inclusiveness at its heart, and an emphasis on minority participation (Wyn Jones and Trystan 1999: 90, Chaney 2011: 73). It is therefore advantageous for the Welsh Government and the Assembly to work with Cytûn, as the face of a wide range of Christian denominations which at times also speaks for the faith sector more widely.

As regards its policy positions, Cytûn provides coherent policy positions to decision makers. Acting as the representative of Christian denominations in Wales and facilitating the Welsh Government and the Assembly in understanding the position of these denominations enables Cytûn to bring a level of coherence to its members' wide range of views, in a way decision makers can understand. This was most clearly seen with the Human Transplantation legislation, but was also seen as part of its role in presenting the view of non-statutory providers of education. In this respect, Cytûn is also widely consulted, with the Assembly and the Welsh Government recognising it as an organisation which offers wide representation.

Cytûn's effectiveness is heightened by its insider status, as seen in its stakeholder position in education, and as a facilitator of its members' views with the Human Transplantation legislation and on constitutional issues. The evidence therefore suggests that Cytûn has influence as understood in terms of Mackay et al's (2005: 10) continuum. Cytûn is recognised by decision makers as having a 'legitimate voice' in issues affecting faith communities and is an organisation that plays a role in 'provoking reconsideration of the way others think'. It also ensures that the views of Christian denominations, and at times the wider faith communities, are understood by decision makers.

Cytûn is well placed to act as an effective pressure group, but it is somewhat reliant on the Assembly and Welsh Government continuing to recognise it as the FBO which can represent the Christian denominations and faith communities in a holistic sense. This reliance could limit Cytûn's ability to criticise decision makers (Grant 1995: 20).

#### 5.2.5.4 The Muslim Council of Wales

The MCW has the weakest political advocacy structure for engaging with the devolved institutions in Wales. Despite this, it has coherent policy position, is widely consulted, has core or specialist insider status conferred upon it and has seen a number of its desired outcomes met. This is likely due to the government sponsored mechanisms it has at its disposal.

The MCW is the only FBO in the case of Wales to utilise a voluntary based political advocacy structure. This could be problematic in a sub-state context known for an emphasis on policy consultation, and a high level of access for organisations which have the staff capacity and skills to exploit it. Nevertheless, the MCW overcomes this by utilising two government mechanisms to its advantage. Perceived as the representative of the Muslim community in Wales, the Council has a space on the Faith Communities Forum as well as a Partnership Protocol (Welsh Assembly Government undated) with the Welsh Government. This means that despite its lack of capacity to engage with a wide range of written consultations, it has a number of access points where it can have informal discussion with Welsh Government ministers.

The MCW cannot always provide a coherent Muslim view to the Welsh Government (see National Assembly for Wales 2013a: 28), but it can and does in the majority of cases, as seen with its engagement with the Human Transplantation legislation and on constitutional issues. As explained above, the Council is also fully consulted by decision makers and recognised as the representative of the Muslim community in Wales in each policy area. The MCW has also had specialist insider status conferred upon it, as a representative of the Muslim Community which provides decision makers with an opportunity to display its

inclusiveness. This was particularly evident in its funding to provide anti-radicalisation education within the Muslim community and in the way the MCW gave an inclusive face to the 'Yes for Wales' campaign. There is also evidence of the MCW seeing its desired policy outcomes met. The MCW was disappointed that the Human Transplantation legislation went ahead, but it is likely that its opposition to the legislation, along with other FBOs, was recognised as legitimate by the Assembly and Welsh Government, and in arguing against it provoked reconsideration in the way others thought about the legislation.

The MCW is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. However, similarly to Cytûn, it is reliant on the Welsh Government and decision makers within the Assembly recognising it as the representative of the Muslim Community in Wales for its continued specialist insider status. This could at least in theory be challenged by another Muslim organisation. Seeking to maintain its continued status as representative could also entrap the Council, leading it to become a 'prisoner organisation' which finds it difficult to criticise decision makers (Grant 1995: 10).

To sum, the analysis in this section has indicated that each of the FBOs are currently well placed to act as effective pressure groups. The Church in Wales and the Catholic Church's effectiveness is mainly based in the specific resources they possess, such as providing education and technical knowledge in areas such as the Human Transplantation legislation, as well as its wide presence within Wales. To some extent, Cytûn and the MCW rely on the Welsh Government and National Assembly continuing to recognise them as representatives of key communities which can explain complex views that can be difficult to decipher. The MCW also seems to be reliant on government sponsored structures. For this reason, they could be prone to become what Grant (1995:20) refers to as 'prisoner groups'.

### **5.3. Testing the Hypotheses**

This final section examines the hypotheses in light of the findings and the analysis of political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness of the FBOs studied in the Wales case study. In the Welsh case, devolved autonomy influences the political advocacy structures of FBOs. However, neither roots within society or theological orientation influence the strategies pursued by FBOs or the status conferred upon FBOs as hypothesised.

H1: 'As the devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the higher the levels of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs'.

H1 has been founded. Each FBO in the case of Wales has increased its capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions. Apart from the MCW, this has been done by appointing staff to engage in the sub-state political system. However, the MCW has developed a voluntary based political advocacy structure as the political devolution process has become entrenched. The Church in Wales, the Catholic Church and the MCW have increased their capacity as the powers devolved have become more entrenched.

H3: 'As the powers devolved become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the more likely it is that the region's FBOs develop a distinct strategy for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

H3 has been founded. Each FBO has focused to a greater extent at the sub-state level as the powers devolved have become more extensive and more entrenched in the region. This development can be seen most clearly in the case of the MCW and the Catholic Church.

H5: 'The stronger the FBO's roots within the devolved region, the more likely it is to have a staff based political advocacy structure'.

H5 has been founded. The only FBO not to develop a staff based political advocacy structure has been the MCW, a weakly rooted FBO. However, Cytûn, which is also a weakly rooted FBO has developed a staff based political advocacy structure. It is likely that this is due to its historical engagement with Welsh politics and the support for further devolution amongst many of its members.

H6: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is to utilise an insider strategy'.

H6 has not been founded in the case of Wales, where each FBO has pursued an insider strategy. Conversely, the FBOs with stronger roots in Welsh society have been found more likely than the weakly rooted FBOs to supplement this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy, utilising their staff capacity and their ability to gain media attention.

H7: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

H7 has not been founded. Each FBO has had a specialist insider status conferred upon it. However, weakly rooted FBOs are more reliant on the government continuing to recognise them as representatives who can speak on behalf of a wide range of people than the strongly rooted FBOs which rely on resources such as education provision.

H8: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is to pursue an insider strategy'.

H8 has not been founded. Theology has not been found to influence the strategy of FBOs, with more theologically moderate and less theologically moderate FBOs pursuing insider strategies.

H9: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

H9 has not been founded. Theology has not been found to influence the status conferred upon FBOs, with each FBO receiving specialist insider status for different reasons.

H10: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

H10 has not been founded. Each FBO has been found to be well placed to act as an effective pressure group. Despite this, the weakly rooted FBOs are much more reliant on the government continuing to recognise them as representatives who can speak on behalf of a wide range of people than the strongly rooted FBOs which rely on resources such as the education they provide. Therefore, while H10 has not been founded, the evidence could suggest that the status conferred upon strongly rooted FBOs is stronger than weakly rooted FBOs.

H11: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

H11 has not been founded. Theology does not seem to play a role in whether a FBO is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. Each FBO is well placed to act as an effective pressure group.



## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the findings in relation to secondary research question 1, 2 and 3 in the cases of the FBOs selected for the case of Wales. The Chapter illustrates that each FBO has increased its capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions in Wales. Apart from the MCW, each FBO has appointed new members of staff for this purpose, with the MCW forming a voluntary based political advocacy structure for political engagement for the first time. Each FBO pursues an insider strategy, supplementing this with a responsible outsider strategy. The strongly rooted FBOs have used this responsible outsider strategy in a fuller sense than the weakly rooted FBOs, taking advantage of their internal capacity and position within society in order to do so. Each FBO has had specialist or core insider status conferred upon them. The strongly rooted FBOs have utilised specific resources for this purpose such as education provision, but the weakly rooted FBOs have identified specific resources which have significance within Wales' devolved political context. They have also made use of the government sponsored faith structures. In light of this, each FBO is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. The next chapter will examine the secondary research questions in light of the FBOs under study in the case of Northern Ireland.

## **Chapter 6: The Case of Northern Ireland**

### **Introduction**

This chapter examines the three secondary research questions with regards to each of the FBOs selected for the Northern Ireland case. The first section outlines the historical role of religion in Northern Ireland and refers to the potential opportunities political devolution created for FBOs. Section 2 investigates the findings in response to the three secondary research questions. With regards to the first secondary research question, each FBO apart from the Catholic Church is a territorial organisation. Each FBO, apart from the Caleb Foundation, has increased its staff capacity to differing extents to engage with the devolved institutions. In response to the second secondary research question regarding FBO strategy, it finds that each FBO examined in the Northern Ireland case study pursues an insider strategy, with strongly rooted FBOs supplementing this with a responsible outsider strategy when necessary. Strongly rooted FBOs have identified specific resources they exchange with government decision makers and hence have received specialist or core insider status in return, but weakly rooted FBOs have not. Finally, examining findings with respect to the third secondary research question illustrates that the strongly rooted FBOs are well placed to act as effective pressure groups, but weakly rooted FBOs are not. This again comes down to the organisation's staffing capacity which affect political advocacy structures and the specific resources which influence the status conferred upon the FBO. Section three assesses the findings in light of the hypotheses. It underlines that in the Northern Ireland case study, devolved autonomy influences the political advocacy structure of FBOs. Roots in society does not influence the strategy the FBOs pursue as hypothesised, but it does

influence the status conferred upon the FBOs by decision makers as hypothesised. Theology plays only a minimal role.

## **6.1 The role of religion in (Northern) Ireland and the potential opportunities provided by political devolution.**

Examining the historical significance of religion and the relationship between religion and politics in this section illustrates that religion has played a key role in Northern Ireland's politics historically, and that religion and politics are still intrinsically linked today. Following this, the opportunities political devolution in Northern Ireland affords FBOs are discussed, serving as a backdrop to the chapter's empirical findings of FBO engagement in Northern Ireland's political system.

### **6.1.1 The Role of Religion in (Northern) Ireland's politics**

Celtic Christians travelled from Britannia to Hibernia, from the late 4<sup>th</sup> century spreading the faith across Ireland through a network of Christian communities deeply embedded in each local dynastic grouping. When the Protestant reformation hit Europe, colonised Ireland held firm to its Catholic faith (MacCulloch 2010: 330-331). The failure of the reformation in Ireland meant that the religion of the people was not the religion of the state, an unprecedented phenomenon in Europe at this time (Gallagher and Worrall 1982: 5). This contradiction meant that religion was intrinsically political in Ireland.

By the sixteenth century, land was taken from Irish families seen to be rebellious and given to settlers who often professed the Protestant faith (Bradshaw and Keogh 2002: 88). As time went on, the indigenous population, whether of Gaelic or English origin, found their Catholic faith becoming an increasing barrier to their political and economic progress. These

tensions, hand in hand with the counter-reformation's revival of the subversive Catholic spirit through a hagiography, history and martyrology sensitive to the Irish's 'proud traditions', led to political rebellion most famously encapsulated in the uprisings of 1590 and 1640 (Bradshaw and Keogh 2002: 86-91). In response to this, the English state, by this time in the hands of Cromwell's puritanical Commonwealth, banned Catholic worship (Bradshaw and Keogh 2002: 93-95). The fate of the Catholic population was not wholly sealed however until the defeat of Catholic James II by Protestant William of Orange in 1690. This led to the rise of the 'penal laws' making it difficult for Catholics to own land and barring Catholics, unprepared to swear an oath of allegiance to the Crown's supremacy, from Parliament and public office.

It was not only Catholics whose faith brought persecution however. Dissenters, most of whom were Presbyterian, resented that their ministers were not recognised by the state and begrudged paying tithes to the Established Church. It was because of this that Presbyterians such as Wolfe Tone were active leaders in the United Irishmen's Rebellion in 1789 (Holmes 2000: 171-172). Pressure such as this led to the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869 and a campaign for Home Rule (Gallagher and Worrall 1982: 7). This entwined politics and religion to an even greater extent. Overnight, Protestants who had enjoyed privilege for centuries feared living in a Catholic-majority state. Many Presbyterians who themselves had been an oppressed minority in Ireland, turned against Home Rule for fear of an Irish Parliament, dominated by Catholics (Holmes 2000: 117). This led to the popular maxim that Home Rule would mean 'Rome Rule' (Gallagher and Worrall 1982: 7). The Ulster Covenant, which threatened armed revolt in response to Home Rule, was signed by thousands of Protestants at the doors of countless Churches (Gallagher and

Worrall 1982: 7-8). There is no doubt that Ireland's partition in 1921, creating Northern Ireland, was in many ways, rightly or wrongly, a product of Northern Protestant's fears of living in an Ireland dominated by Catholicism and the Catholic Church.

FBOs were active in their engagement with the Northern Ireland Parliament throughout its short life. This is epitomised in the way both the Protestant churches and Catholic Church engaged with education policy. Ó Corráin (2006: 121) gives the example of the Protestant churches working with the Orange Order to influence the 1923 Education Act, ensuring that newly created state schools became de facto Protestant schools. As was discussed in Chapter 2, the Catholic Church engaged heavily with education policy throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning of the century, Catholic Education was entirely funded by the Church, but as the century continued the Church achieved greater funding for its schools (see McGrath 2000, Ó Corráin 2006).

Religion and politics have therefore been intrinsically fused throughout Ireland's history, including the creation of Northern Ireland. However, by the 1990s an academic consensus was developing which argued that religion was no more than an ethnic marker in the conflict (Ganiel and Jones 2012: 310). McGarry and O'Leary (1995) argued that the conflict was ethno-national and that attributing religion as the cause of the conflict was greatly over-simplifying the conflict's reality. However, this position has been challenged. For instance, Mitchell's (2011) thesis builds upon Ruane and Todd's (1996: 10-11) argument that the conflict is a product of the connections between various dimensions of difference in Northern Ireland. Mitchell (2011:1) is clear that the Northern Ireland conflict is not and has never been a 'holy war', but argues that because somebody no longer identifies as religious, it does not mean that they drop their association with Catholicism or Protestantism. She

argues that the role of the churches in education and family formation and the role of religious ideas and symbolism within society create the wealth of ideological concepts found in Northern Ireland (Mitchell 2011: 4-20).

Not only is religion a key factor in the way individuals understand Northern Ireland's society but FBOs have at times been part of proliferating the conflict. There is little evidence that the Churches or clergy played a role in the violence (Mitchell 2011: 43-44, 51-52), but it is possible that the language and rhetoric used by some religious leaders may have encouraged sectarianism and even violence. For instance, Ian Paisley's 'Protestant Telegraph' was used as a propaganda machine against Catholicism and the Catholic Church (Elliott 2009: 89). Some of the Catholic Bishops, such as Archbishop (later Cardinal) Tomás Ó Fiaich, could also be accused of causing division in Northern Ireland, taking every opportunity to 'imbibe the republican tradition and anti-partitionist sentiment' (Gallagher and Worrall 1982: 118). However, individuals such as Archbishop Robin Eames, the Rev. Roy Magee and Father Alec Reid, also played key roles in the peace process (see Brewer et al 2011: 110-117). The churches may have missed their opportunity to publicly outline a 'vision of political compromise' (Brewer et al 2011: 99-100), but their public neutrality may have allowed individual clerics to help bring about key secret peace talks. It is important to note that these individuals were not always representing their respective churches (see Brewer et al 2011: 110-113), but nonetheless it is also difficult to detach these figures from the churches with which they were so intimately involved. Furthermore, as noted in Chapter 4, the churches have also traditionally been involved in education policy and on questions of sexuality and reproductive rights in Northern Ireland.

Religion is still intimately connected to Northern Ireland's society, but FBOs have been engaging in a much more pluralistic society since 1998. As noted in Chapter 4, Northern Ireland still has a high level of religiosity (Ashworth and Farthing 2007: 10, Ganiel and Mitchell 2012: 68-69). Even so, the peace process signalled a 'repositioning' of civil society (McCall and Williamson 2001: 372). In the latter half of the 'Troubles', the UK Government and EU greatly strengthened Northern Ireland's civil society by facilitating funds and developing close relationships between the community sector and policy makers (McCall and Williamson 2001: 364). The Northern Ireland faith sector has also expanded. Organisations such as the Evangelical Contribution On Northern Ireland (ECONI),<sup>49</sup> which received Community Relation Council funding as part of the Peace Process (Ganiel 2008a: 39), have set up alongside the more traditional denominations. Furthermore, a Muslim community of around 4,000 individuals now exists (Young 2016). Northern Ireland has also had a politically active inter-faith forum since 1993 (see NIFF undated). These additions add a new dimension to Northern Ireland's political sphere to which traditional FBOs need to adapt.

### 6.1.2 The potential opportunities created by political devolution

Chapter 1 raised how devolution from Westminster to the sub-state level in Northern Ireland provided an opportunity for FBOs to engage politically in a way that had not before been possible. This section investigates these opportunities in greater depth, identifying the access points available for FBOs to engage with the devolved political institutions. It examines in turn each of the Belfast Agreement's three 'strand 1' institutions; the legislative Assembly, the Executive and the Civic Forum.

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<sup>49</sup> Or 'Contemporary Christianity' has it has been named since 2005.

As noted in Chapter 4, the Northern Ireland Act (1998) transferred the functions which had been administered by the six departments that had evolved as part of the Northern Ireland Office under direct rule to the Northern Ireland Assembly (Wilford 2000: 581). The Northern Ireland Assembly therefore has responsibility for social and economic policy areas, with 'excepted matters' or matters of national importance remaining the responsibility of Westminster. Policies such as broadcasting and genetic research remain 'reserved matters' and could be devolved in future, as happened with the 'reserved matter' of policing and justice in 2010 (UK Government 2013). FBOs engaged with the Northern Ireland Office on a number of these policy areas under administrative devolution and hence while FBOs were not new to engaging with political institutions in Northern Ireland, political devolution set the basis for increasing the access points available to them. However, there is evidence that the Catholic Church and main Protestant denominations were part of Northern Ireland's territorial policy community prior to 1998 (Connolly 1990: 118-119), consequently this democratisation of access may not have strengthened their role in the same way as it may have done for more weakly rooted FBOs. Even so, the widening of access brought about through the establishment of the Assembly may well be positive for FBOs more generally. This access has at times been limited as the Assembly was suspended or collapsed four times between 2000 and 2007 (see Knox 2010: 9-12), with pressure groups re-orientating themselves towards the Northern Ireland Office during these periods (Watts 2007: 161). However, relative stability since 2007 has strengthened the opportunity for engagement with the devolved political institutions.

The legislature provides a number of opportunities for FBO engagement. Firstly, elected representatives currently from eight different political parties may provide



opportunities for FBOs to find allies, build coalitions, and defend or challenge legislation with the wide range of political voices represented in the Assembly. The Northern Ireland Assembly's consociational design also creates opportunities for engagement through its departmental committees. In addition to their more conventional legislative and scrutinising roles, the statutory committees advise and assist the executive departments in the formulation of policy and can initiate primary legislation (Wilford 2000: 581-582, Knox 2010: 19), although Birrell (2012: 102) has noted that the committee's roles have evolved into a more traditional role of scrutiny, policy development and consultation with ministers. Even so, the legislature's committee system is an outlet by which pressure groups can attempt to influence legislation, whether this is through giving evidence, attempting to use the committee to amend legislation or to influence primary legislation from within the statutory committees. Likewise, Private Members' Bills can also be passed from within the legislature (Knox 2010: 20), providing further opportunities for FBOs to pursue its agenda along with sympathetic MLAs. Not only does the legislature provide potential opportunities for FBOs to further their agendas, but the Assembly's consociational design also provides methods for FBOs to prevent undesired legislation. For instance, the Assembly's 'Petition of Concern' mechanism, whereby legislation can be vetoed with the signatures of thirty MLAs if it is perceived as detrimental to one of the two communities (Wilford 2000: 580), may also provide an opportunity for pressure groups to combat undesirable legislation by lobbying for its use. Unlike the legislature in Wales, there is no cross party group on faith associated with the Northern Ireland legislature. However, non-Christian FBOs may find the Assembly's All Party Group on Ethnic Minority Communities (APGEMC) a valuable space for working with MLAs and other organisations on common issues.

The executive also presents potential opportunities for FBO engagement. For instance, the expectation on Government departments to consult widely throughout voluntary and community groups (Osborne 2003: 350) may provide opportunities for a wide range of organisations to engage with decision makers. Furthermore, Chaney (2011: 264) has noted the apparent emphasis on partnership working and policy consultation in Northern Ireland. This presents a shift from the situation prior to 1998, where Northern Ireland was run by 'hands off' direct rule Ministers (Carmichael and Osborne 2003: 208) who were at times disinterested or even ignorant of the political context (Levy 1995: 213-214). Section 75 of the Belfast Agreement also places a duty on executive departments to promote equality of opportunity when drafting legislation, with religious belief and race included in its definition. Not only should the Executive evaluate the effect of its legislation on minority groups, but it must also actively consult these groups when developing policy (Beveridge et al 2000: 401-403). There are mixed reports regarding the Executive's success in consulting and engaging widely with ethnic minorities and FBOs (see Chaney 2011: 234-235, 259), but it does, at least in theory, provide a potential opportunity for minority FBOs to engage with the policy process.

The consociational design of the Northern Ireland executive may also provide potential opportunities and challenges for FBO engagement. The 'grand coalition' Executive which includes both sides of the ethnic divide (Wilford and Wilson 2003: 11)<sup>50</sup> makes it more likely that at least one minister will be sympathetic to the FBO's cause. However, this could also present a problem for FBOs, if a minister for a particular policy area is not

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<sup>50</sup> Between 2011-2016, five parties were represented in the Northern Ireland Executive. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Sinn Féin, The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). However, after the 2016 election, the UUP and the SDLP decided not to take the one ministerial position both parties were entitled to, opting instead to form the official opposition.

sympathetic to the FBO's position. This could be particularly problematic for FBOs that are intimately connected to one side of the nationalist or unionist community, possibly making access to ministers on the 'other side' more difficult. However, the possibility of a party or minister turning an executive department into a personal 'fiefdom' is offset by a mechanism of no confidence from within the Assembly, which can be set in motion with thirty signatures and cross party support (Wilford 2000: 581).

An opportunity for FBOs to engage with the Northern Ireland Executive on issues specifically related to faith might also be provided through the 'Community Faiths' Forum' (CFF). This space is more limited in its scope than the Welsh Government's 'Faith Communities Forum', as it engages with issues surrounding one department, Social Development (see Communities Faith Forum undated). Even so, this may be a potential access point for certain policy areas, particularly for weakly rooted FBOs which might be more limited in their opportunity to access decision makers.

Finally, the Civic Forum, may also provide potential opportunities for FBO engagement. The Civic Forum was created by the Northern Ireland Act (1998) as an independent body which was to have consultative status with representatives drawn from civil society, including the Churches (Chaney 2011: 81). The Forum's members were to discuss economic, social and cultural issues (Wilford and Wilson 2001: 56-57) with the First and Deputy First Ministers required to consult the Forum on a regular basis (Knox 2010: 26). Minority FBOs were not given a place on the forum, but this space gave the churches an opportunity to attempt to have their voices heard. However, a number of politicians were unhappy with the Civic Forum's consultative role (Wilford and Wilson 2001: 57) and the Forum's short life ended in 2002 when the Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended (Knox

2010: 26). When the Assembly was re-installed after the suspension, the Democratic Unionist Party vehemently opposed the return of the Forum, claiming that it was 'anti-unionist, anti-Orange and anti-Evangelical' (Knox 2010: 27). The Forum has not been re-instated and hence it could be seen as a lost opportunity for FBO engagement (see Chaney 2011: 81-82).

In conclusion, this section has shown that religion has played a key part in Northern Ireland's politics both now and historically. The changes in Northern Ireland's constitutional set-up may present some challenges for some FBOs used to having close contact to the political class, but it also provides potential opportunities for FBO engagement more broadly. The remainder of this empirical chapter examines how FBOs have attempted to capitalise on these opportunities by engaging with Northern Ireland's devolved institutions.

### 6.1.3 The Cases

Having discussed religion and politics in Northern Ireland and the opportunities the Northern Ireland Assembly has created for engagement, this section establishes the background to the political engagement of the FBO case studies prior to 1998. This acts as a backdrop to the post-devolution findings in the following sections. Each FBO case study is examined in turn.

As regards the Presbyterian Church before the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly, it was actively involved in the politics of the region. Presbyterians were historically persecuted as dissenters outside the established Church, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century they became politically allied to unionism and the British state (Holmes 2000: 117-123). As one of the main Protestant denominations in Northern Ireland, the Presbyterian Church formed part of the Northern Ireland Office's territorial policy community, providing it with

opportunities to engage with education and on a number of moral issues (Connolly 1990: 118). The Church and Government Committee has traditionally been given responsibility for the Church's political engagement and consulted with the UK government during direct rule.<sup>51</sup> The Presbyterian Church engages with education policy through the Transferor Representative Council (TRC) (McKelvey 2006). Furthermore, as has already been noted, the Church also played an important role in the constitutional debates prior to 1998.

As noted in Chapter 4, the Catholic Church in Ireland has always been a key institution within the Northern Ireland Catholic community, acting as the sole representative of the community for many years (Mitchell 2011:45-48) and supporting Catholic emancipation through the Civil Rights movement (O'Corrain 2006: 143, Mitchell 2011: 44-45). Clerics from within the Church were also involved as mediators in the Peace Process (Brewer et al 2011: 110-114). As with the Protestant denominations, the Catholic Church formed part of the Northern Ireland Office's territorial policy community, providing it with opportunities to engage with a number of moral issues and with education policy (Connolly 1990:118, McGrath 2000, O'Córrain 2006). Its Bishops have also consistently spoken out on the social condition of its community in relation to issues such as health, housing and welfare (O'Córrain 2006: 114-142).

The Muslim community in Northern Ireland has traditionally been careful to maintain a low profile within Northern Ireland society, not wanting to take sides or become embroiled in the conflict (Marranci 2004: 20) and hence was not significantly engaged with the region's politics before the establishment of the Assembly in 1998. This could be due to

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<sup>51</sup> The Church and Government Committee changed its name to the Church and Society Committee by the General Assembly of 2005 and to the Council for Church in Society by the General Assembly of 2016. However, by September 2016 the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's website refers to it as the 'Council for Public Affairs' (see Presbyterian Church in Ireland undated c).

a combination of both the 'Troubles' and a lack of capacity to do so. However, since 1998 the Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC) has expressed the wish to play a greater role within Northern Ireland society (Marranci 2004: 20).

Likewise, prior to the establishment of the Assembly, the Caleb Foundation's political engagement was minimal, focusing instead on social and cultural issues. For instance, its aims included lobbying the BBC for more air time for denominations which espoused more fundamentalist Christian theology (Ganiel 2008a: 111-112). However, the organisation took an anti-agreement stance in the public debate surrounding the Belfast Agreement (Brewer et al 2011: 119-120).

#### 6.1.4 The Hypotheses

Before reporting on the findings of how the FBOs have engaged with the devolved political system, the expected findings as hypothesised are outlined. For this case, it is possible to test hypotheses 1, 3 and 5-11.

H1: 'As the devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the higher the levels of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs'.

In response to Hypothesis 1, we expect to see a greater level of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs as a greater level of autonomy is devolved to Northern Ireland and as the political devolution settlement becomes more entrenched.

H3: 'As devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the more likely it is that the region's FBOs develop a distinct strategy for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

With respect to hypothesis 3, we expect to see FBOs in Northern Ireland developing distinct strategies as the powers in the region become more extensive and entrenched.

H5: 'The stronger the FBO's roots within the devolved region, the more likely it is to have a staff based political advocacy structure'.

The expectation is that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland will have a staff-based political advocacy structure owing to their stronger roots in society, while the BIC and the Caleb Foundation will not, owing to their relatively weaker roots within society.

H6: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is to utilise an insider strategy'.

On the basis of Hypothesis 6, there is a greater expectation that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland will pursue an insider strategy than the BIC and the Caleb Foundation.

H7: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is that devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

Hypothesis 7 leads to the expectation that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland are more likely to have core or specialist insider status conferred upon them by the devolved institution than the BIC and the Caleb Foundation.

H8: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is to pursue an insider strategy'.

Hypothesis 8 takes us in a different direction. In light of this hypothesis there is a greater expectation that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the BIC will pursue an insider strategy than the Caleb Foundation and the Catholic Church.

H9: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

Similarly, Hypothesis 9 leads to the expectation that the Presbyterian Church and the BIC are more likely to have core or specialist insider status conferred upon them than the Caleb Foundation and the Catholic Church.

H10: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

In response to Hypothesis 10, we expect to see that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland are better placed to act as effective pressure groups than the BIC and the Caleb Foundation.

H11: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

Hypothesis 11 on the other hand, leads to the expectation that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the BIC are better placed to act as effective pressure groups than the Caleb Foundation and the Catholic Church.



## **6.2. Findings and Analysis.**

Section 1 provided an historical context for FBO political engagement and assessed the hypotheses in the case of Northern Ireland. On this basis, the findings in relation to FBO engagement post-devolution can now be presented.

### **6.2.1 Political Advocacy Structure: Findings**

This section examines the first secondary research question, which asks:

‘What type of political advocacy structures have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’

As noted in Chapter 4, this thesis analyses three aspects of FBO political advocacy structure; whether it is a centralised or devolved organisation, whether its elite run or democratic and whether its engagement is carried out by volunteers or professional staff members. How the FBOs have adapted to engage with the devolved political institutions in Northern Ireland is also examined.

The section indicates that FBOs in the case of Northern Ireland, apart from the Catholic Church are territorial organisations. Each FBO has adapted its political advocacy structures to engage with the devolved political institutions by increasing staff capacity apart from the Caleb Foundation.

#### **6.2.1.1 The Presbyterian Church**

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is a territorial organisation. The Church has a democratic political advocacy structure, although elites are dominant within its day to day political engagement. There is a role for volunteers within its political advocacy structure, but

professional staff members are highly involved in its political engagement. This staff capacity has increased to engage with the devolved institutions.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is what Keating et al (2009) refer to as a territorial organisation, which engages in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It is fully autonomous with its headquarters in Belfast. The Church's focus is in Northern Ireland (O'Córrain 2006: 1), and this is also the case with its political engagement with the 'Republic of Ireland Panel' making up only a small sub-division of the Council for Church in Society's report.<sup>52</sup>

The Church has a democratic political advocacy structure, but elites within the Church are dominant in its day to day political engagement. The Assembly is the 'supreme governing body' of the Church, providing an opportunity for Ministers and an Elder from each Congregation to deliberate and vote on the Church's business every June (Presbyterian Church in Ireland undated a). Within the General Assembly sits the 'Council for Church in Society' which engages politically on behalf of the Church and has a number of sub-committees such as the Education Committee which engages with education policy. The make-up of the Council itself is democratic, in that each Presbytery may nominate a representative elder to the Council (Presbyterian Church in Ireland undated a). However, while the reports of the 'Council for Church in Society' must be passed by the General Assembly, it also represents the Church throughout the year, providing consultation responses, meeting decision makers and with its convenor speaking publicly on political issues (e.g. see Williamson 2015). Therefore, the committee is scrutinised by the General

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<sup>52</sup> In the Council for Church in Society's report to the General Assembly in 2016 <<https://www.presbyterianireland.org/getmedia/a7c89058-4f5d-476d-bfcd-f0dc81add6ea/12-Church-in-Society.pdf.aspx>>, the Republic of Ireland Panel's report took up less than one page of the twelve pages that made up the main body of the report.

Assembly, but it is at quite some liberty to shape the Church's agenda between Assemblies. The Council's convenor is particularly powerful in this respect, often appearing in the media as the representative of the Church on political matters. Furthermore, the Church's moderator, a 'first among equals' (Dunlop 1995: 9) for only one year, can also use his or her position to speak out in a personal capacity. Therefore, the Presbyterian Church does have a democratic political advocacy structure, but the role of the convenor of the Church in Society committee and the Moderator means that elites within the Church play a powerful role in its day to day engagement.

The Presbyterian Church utilises both volunteers and professional staff in its political advocacy structure. Lay people can serve on the Council for Church in Society and its sub-committees. However, the Church is staff focused, utilising professional staff, such as the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, in the day to day workings of the Church (see Presbyterian Church in Ireland undated b). In response to political devolution, the Church has increased its use of professional staff within its political advocacy structure. In 2007, as the Assembly was restored, the Church recognised that as control of education policy returned to the Northern Ireland Assembly, there was a need for the Church to ensure it had the capacity to engage with it sufficiently, particularly because of the increasing levels of consultation.<sup>53</sup> Education had also become very politicised with the Department of Education's decision to re-structure the Education and Library Boards, into one Education Authority (General Assembly 2006: 209).<sup>54</sup> In response to this, the Church added education policy to the responsibilities of the Deputy Clerk, one of its senior members of staff (see General Assembly 2008: 220). According to a senior respondent from the Church, this decision was

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<sup>53</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

<sup>54</sup> The original proposal was to create an Education and Skills Authority, however later legislation led to the eventual body being named the Education Authority.

made within a wider context of the Church beginning to consider the implications of the Assembly for its political engagement.<sup>55</sup> The Church's use of professional staff was developed further in 2015. During an overhaul of its structure, the committee for Church and Society was upgraded to a Council of the Church and appointed a Public Affairs Officer to serve it (General Assembly 2015: 213). A senior representative was clear in an interview with the author that the Church felt other interest groups, ones which at times oppose the Church's agenda, had the capacity to engage, and that the Church needed to increase its capacity in order to be competitive in Northern Ireland's political sphere.<sup>56</sup> The re-establishment of the Assembly and the politicised nature of education policy appear to have led the Church to adapt its structure to focus on political engagement and to increasing its staff capacity for this purpose.

In sum, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is a territorial organisation, based in Northern Ireland but also engaging in the Republic of Ireland. It is democratic, but elites within the Church are dominant in its day to day political engagement. There is a role for volunteers within its political advocacy structure, but professional staff members play a key role. The Church has increased its staff capacity since the establishment of the Assembly.

#### 6.2.1.2 The Catholic Church in Ireland

The Catholic Church in Northern Ireland is a centralised organisations based in Maynooth in the Republic of Ireland. However, the Northern Bishops and their staff have a high level of autonomy at the sub-state level to engage politically in Northern Ireland. The Church is elite run with professional staff carrying out its political engagement. The Church has increased its staff capacity to engage with the devolved institution.

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

<sup>56</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (June 29<sup>th</sup> 2015).

The Catholic Church in Ireland is a centralised organisation at the central level, which confers a high level of autonomy on the Church in Northern Ireland to engage politically. This is illustrated in the fact that the Northern Ireland Church sends its Bishops to the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference where decisions regarding the Church's political engagement are made, but at the same time has its own staff in Northern Ireland engaging with Northern Ireland matters and the devolved institution. The Church in Northern Ireland enjoyed this high level of autonomy prior to 1998 and it has continued since the establishment of the Assembly.<sup>57</sup>

The Church is elite led with no democratic function within the Church, and hence the political engagement of the Church is elite driven. The Church is also staff focused with the Northern Bishops advised by a permanent member of staff who takes responsibility for both political affairs and education in Northern Ireland.<sup>58</sup> The Church also relies on a statutory body, the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools (CCMS) for political representation in education. In 2003, the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference formed the Northern Ireland Catholic Council on Social Affairs (NICCOSA), increasing the Church's staff capacity for political engagement in Northern Ireland.<sup>59</sup> The Council coordinates and enhances the work of the Northern Bishops on political issues in Northern Ireland and represents the Bishops to decision makers (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference undated). This structure was created during direct rule, but it was created so as to engage with social policy in Northern Ireland, and hence was created for engaging with the devolved structures (see Irish Catholic Bishops'

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<sup>57</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Catholic Church in Ireland (July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015).

<sup>58</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Catholic Church in Ireland (July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015).

<sup>59</sup> Correspondence with representative of NICCOSA (August 1<sup>st</sup> 2016).

Council undated). In 2006, the Church appointed a full time researcher for the Council. This individual co-ordinates the consultation responses and publications produced by NICCOSA.<sup>60</sup>

In sum, the Catholic Church in Ireland is a centralised organisation which has conferred a high level of autonomy on the Church in Northern Ireland. Its political advocacy structure is elite run, with very minimal membership involvement and no democratic function. The Church has increased its capacity to engage with the devolved institutions through the creation of NICCOSA. The Church utilises staff for its political engagement, having increased its staff capacity in Northern Ireland in 2006 in order to engage with the devolved political institutions.

#### 6.2.1.3 The Belfast Islamic Centre

The Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC) is a territorial organisation loosely affiliated to the central level. Its political advocacy structure is democratic and it utilises volunteers in its political engagement. However, with support from the Northern Ireland Executive, the BIC has increased its staff capacity to engage with the devolved institution.

The BIC is a territorial organisation with full autonomy at the sub-state level. The BIC is affiliated to the Muslim Council of Britain, recognised as one of its 'local' member organisations (see Muslim Council of Britain undated), but has full autonomy over its political engagement in Northern Ireland. The BIC has a democratic political advocacy structure, using a delegate based system. The centre is governed by an elected executive committee which makes decisions regarding the organisation's political advocacy, and is answerable to the organisation's membership.<sup>61</sup> Its executive committee is made up of

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<sup>60</sup> Correspondence with representative of NICCOSA (August 1<sup>st</sup> 2016).

<sup>61</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015).

volunteers, who have responsibility for the organisation's political engagement (Marranci 2004: 20).<sup>62</sup> According to McCombe and Khan (2005: 37) the BIC's engagement in the public sphere increased greatly under the voluntary chairmanship of Dr. Mamun Mobayed between 1992 and 2000, with the centre gaining stability as an organisation and favourable media coverage at this time. However, since 2008 the BIC has had a partial staff based political advocacy structure. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) awarded the BIC £45,000 to assist in the appointment of a Director and an Administrator (Northern Ireland Executive 2008). This funding is to 'allow BIC to carry out a range of activities to help local Muslims integrate in to wider society' (Northern Ireland Executive 2008) but it also means that the BIC has staff which have time to engage politically and respond to government consultations.<sup>63</sup> In this respect, the return of political devolution has focused the organisation's political engagement, with OFMDFM acting as a 'patron' providing the necessary means for the centre to move towards a staff based political advocacy structure.

In summary, the BIC is an autonomous territorial organisation which has a democratic based political advocacy structure. The BIC utilises volunteers in its political advocacy, but since 2008 it has utilised a partial staff based political advocacy structure. In this respect, it has increased its staff capacity, with the support of OFMDFM, to engage with Northern Ireland's devolved political institutions.

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>63</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015).

#### 6.2.1.4 The Caleb Foundation

The Caleb Foundation is a territorial organisation. It is elite led and its political advocacy is run by volunteers. The Caleb Foundation has not increased its capacity to engage with the devolved institution.

The Caleb Foundation is what Keating et al (2009) refer to as a territorial organisation. The organisation is wholly independent and autonomous in its political engagement in Northern Ireland. Caleb's political advocacy structure is elite driven. It does not have a defined membership structure (Clarke 2012), and hence its 'Council of Reference', through which it conducts its decision making is not democratically elected. Instead, a number of high profile Ministers and Elders from within conservative/fundamentalist Protestant church circles are co-opted onto the Council of Reference.<sup>64</sup> Within this structure, an executive committee undertakes the day to day decisions (see Ganiel 2008a: 112).<sup>65</sup> The role of the Chairperson is relatively symbolic with the organisation's secretary undertaking most of the work.<sup>66</sup> All of Caleb Foundation's engagement is done on a voluntary basis. The Caleb Foundation is therefore a territorial organisation which is wholly autonomous in its political engagement. Caleb's political advocacy structure is elite driven and voluntary based.

#### 6.2.2 Political Advocacy Structure: Analysis

The case of Northern Ireland indicates that the majority of the FBOs selected are territorial organisations, with the BIC a territorial organisation affiliated to a central level organisation. However, the Catholic Church is a centralised organisation which has conferred a high level

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<sup>64</sup> For instance, a respondent from the Caleb Foundation discussed how he was 'invited' onto the Council of Reference by an individual already a member of the Council (interview with senior respondent from the Caleb Foundation, July 2015).

<sup>65</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Caleb Foundation (July 2015).

<sup>66</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Caleb Foundation (July 2015).



of autonomy on the Church in Northern Ireland. As regards whether the FBO is democratic or elite driven, the BIC is the only organisation in the case of Northern Ireland which has a purely democratic political advocacy structure, while the Catholic Church and Caleb Foundation are elite driven. The Presbyterian Church's political advocacy structure is partially democratic through the General Assembly. However, elites are dominant in its day to day engagement. With regards to having a staff or voluntary based political advocacy structure, the Catholic Church is the only organisation which is wholly staff based. It has also increased its staff capacity to engage with the devolved institutions. The Caleb Foundation is at the other end of the spectrum with a wholly voluntary based political advocacy structure. Both the Presbyterian Church and the BIC utilise a combination of volunteers and professional staff. The BIC has traditionally used a voluntary based political advocacy structure, but has become partially staff focused since 2008. The Presbyterian Church has a longer history of utilising professional staff and increased its staff capacity in 2007.

The findings indicate that Keating's drivers of adaptation have played a role in shaping the political advocacy structures the FBOs have adopted to engage with the devolved political institutions. Keating (2013: 119) argues that the devolution of power from the centre to the sub-state level can induce pressure groups to follow suit and engage politically in the region. This has been seen in the case of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland which have increased their staff capacity so as to engage with the devolved institutions. In this case, re-establishment of the Assembly in 2007 and the politicised nature of education policy in Northern Ireland appear to have been catalysts in the organisations' decision to strengthen their political advocacy structures through greater staff capacity. This has also been seen in the case of the BIC, which has adopted a

staff based political advocacy structure due to support from the devolved executive. The role of the Executive in providing the means by which the BIC has been able to increase its political engagement through a partially staff based political advocacy structure, suggests that Keating's (2013: 123) claim that sub-state governments encourage and even sponsor pressure groups to adapt to the sub-state level is evident in the case of Northern Ireland.

In summary, the FBOs selected for the case of Northern Ireland have diverse political advocacy structures. The majority of the FBOs selected are territorial organisation and are autonomous over their political engagement in Northern Ireland. Only the Catholic Church's political advocacy structure is centralised although it has conferred a high level of autonomy on the Church in Northern Ireland. The BIC's political advocacy structure is democratic while the Presbyterian Church is partially democratic and the Catholic Church and Caleb Foundation are elite run. The political advocacy structure of each FBO is either wholly or partially staff based, apart from the Caleb Foundation which is voluntary based. Each FBO, apart from the Caleb Foundation, has increased its capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions in Northern Ireland.

### 6.2.3 Strategy: Findings

Following the examination of the political advocacy structures of FBOs, this section investigates the second secondary research question, which asks:

'What type of strategies have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?'

The strategies adopted by the FBOs are investigated using the three policies presented in Chapter 4; education, same-sex marriage legislation and constitutional issues.

The section demonstrates that each FBO pursues an insider strategy, with strongly rooted FBOs supplementing this with a responsible outsider strategy. The strongly rooted FBOs have a specialist or core insider strategy conferred upon them by decision makers, but the weakly rooted FBOs do not. The strongly rooted FBOs have identified specific resources which they have exchanged with decision makers for specialist or core insider status but this is not the case for weakly rooted FBOs.

#### 6.2.3.1 The Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The Presbyterian Church pursues an insider strategy in each of the policy areas, supplementing this with an outsider strategy when engaging with the issue of same-sex marriage and on constitutional issues. The Church has core or specialist insider status conferred upon it in each policy area.

##### 6.2.3.1.1 Education

The Presbyterian Church pursues an insider strategy in education and has received specialist insider status in return. One of the largest issues looming over education policy in Northern Ireland since the re-establishment of political devolution in 1998 has been the restructuring of the region's Education and Library Boards into one centralised Education Authority (see AgendaNI 2013 and McCarry 2015). Legal advice obtained by the Minister stated that allowing Transferor Representatives, such as the Presbyterian Church, representation on the board contravened the equality requirements of the Northern Ireland Acts (Transferor Representative Council 2007: 1) and hence the Church found itself defending its right of representation on the Board which is responsible for primary and secondary school services in Northern Ireland.

The Presbyterian Church utilised an insider strategy in response to this statement by engaging with both the executive and the legislature. The Presbyterian Church worked in coalition with the other Protestant denominations, through the Transferor Representative Council, an organisation which represents the Protestant denominations which transferred their schools to the state in the twentieth century (see McKelvey 2006). By working in coalition, the Church was able to present a Protestant position. This was first done through responding to the Review of Public Administration in 2007. Here, the Church argued against appointments to the board being made by the Minister on the basis of 'merit', arguing instead that Transferor Representatives should be represented by right (General Assembly 2007: 206). The Church then contested the department's legal advice (General Assembly 2010: 267) and began to consider whether judicial review would be required.<sup>67</sup> It also put pressure on the Minister by questioning whether Catholic representation on the board without Protestant representation was leading to inequality in education (General Assembly 2007: 207). In all likelihood, questioning the decision on this basis ensured that the unionist parties in Northern Ireland supported the Church's representation. A senior respondent from the Church noted in an interview with the author: 'we took legal advice...of course we did that, of course we lobbied, but we were pushing open doors from every party, unionists certainly, but also (the) SDLP'.<sup>68</sup>

This is also evidenced in the public pronouncements made by unionist politicians in support of the Protestant Church's representation. The then Chair of the Education Committee, Mervyn Storey, argued that the Democratic Unionist's (DUP) objection to the Bill was based on its failure to provide Transferor representation (Dineen 2012). As is

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Presbyterian Church (August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

<sup>68</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Presbyterian Church (August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

evident from the Committee's minutes, the Presbyterian Church, along with TRC representatives, received a warm welcome from Storey when they provided evidence as part of their insider strategy to his committee in 2012 (Northern Ireland Assembly 2012). Likewise, the UUP was of the opinion that the position of 'religious stakeholders' must be protected in the legislation (Dineen 2012).

The consociational nature of Northern Ireland's political system makes it difficult for controversial legislation to be passed in the legislature and hence the unionist political parties' support of the Transferors greatly bolstered the Presbyterian Church's position. With the unionists supporting the Protestant denomination's right to representation, a deal had to be brokered or the Education Bill(s)<sup>69</sup> could not be passed (see Birrell 2013: 771). The Church's success in retaining its insider status in education denotes its ability, with support from unionist politicians, to influence legislation within an abrasive political system. The Church finds itself engaging in a difficult political environment, but its position is bolstered through the support of the unionist political parties.

Therefore, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland pursues an insider strategy in education, and has managed to protect its core insider status despite the challenge to its position. However, the findings also suggest that the Church's historic privilege within Northern Ireland's political system cannot be taken for granted. Even so, while equality legislation can challenge the position of the Presbyterian Church, the Church has also recognised it as a line of defence.

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<sup>69</sup> The Education Bill had to be re-drafted a number of times.

#### 6.2.3.1.2 Same-Sex Marriage

The Presbyterian Church, through its Council for Church in Society<sup>70</sup> has utilised an insider strategy, supplemented by a responsible outsider strategy to oppose same-sex marriage. It has also utilised a responsible outsider strategy in coalition with the Catholic Church.

The Church's main insider strategy has been to contact MLAs and political parties, asking them to defend traditional marriage. The Council for Church and Society sent out letters to each party, and subsequently to each MLA so as to ensure that they were aware of the Church's opposition on the proposed change to marriage law in Northern Ireland (General Assembly 2013). This can be seen as a strategy to shore up support for the Church's position, ensuring MLAs are aware that they are opposing the Church if they opt to support same-sex marriage.

This insider strategy had some success in shaping the debate within the chamber. In each debate, the views of Northern Ireland's Churches,<sup>71</sup> and particularly the Presbyterian Church,<sup>72</sup> is a common discussion point. The Church did not succeed in changing the position of those in favour of same-sex marriage, but the Church's position appears to be respected even by those who support the Bill. This would suggest that the Church's insider strategy had some impact on the tone of the debate, and as a respected institution within Northern Ireland it managed to ensure that the position against the legislation is widely viewed as an acceptable and defensible one. Further to this, the Alliance Party's leader, David Ford, a supporter of the Bill, proposed amending the Bill so as to add protection for faith groups. He noted that this echoed the Presbyterian Church's call for a 'respectful

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<sup>70</sup> Board of Church and Society until 2014

<sup>71</sup> See NI Assembly Hansard 2012: 14-18, 21, 2013: 17-20, 2014: 19-20, 22, 44, 2015a: 18-19)

<sup>72</sup> See NI Assembly Hansard 2012: 17, 21 2013: 18, 19 2014: 19, 22 2015a: 19

debate and dialogue on the issue’ (Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2013: 17). It is not clear if Ford pursued this amendment in order to try and satisfy the Presbyterian Church’s dissatisfaction with the proposed legislation, but it is worth noting that it has been widely reported that he stepped aside from his role as a Presbyterian Elder because of the unease his position caused to many within his Church (see Cranmer 2013). This might be perceived as comparable to the practice of some Catholic priests refusing mass to politicians who vote in contrary to the Church’s teaching on moral issues (see McConnell 2013).

The Church has also engaged with the public debate utilising a responsible outsider strategy. However, the public debate has been challenging for the Church. Those in favour of same-sex marriage have framed the debate around the question of equality. For instance, Amnesty International’s Northern Ireland Director, Patrick Corrigan, has argued that ‘it’s high time Northern Ireland said a big ‘we do too’ to equality’ (Cromie 2015). Furthermore, Sinn Féin has connected the debate to the wider narrative of civil rights in Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Assembly 2013: 43). This plays into what Bean (2007: 10) has referred to as Sinn Féin’s ‘performative discourse of equality’. The use of this language questions whether all citizens in Northern Ireland are equal, or whether some are still treated as second class citizens. This subtle, yet stinging accusation makes it difficult for those against same-sex marriage to develop a positive narrative against the legislation. Despite this, the Church’s responsible outsider strategy has publicly challenged the idea that to oppose same-sex marriage is to oppose equality by arguing that opposition to same-sex marriage is a matter of conscience (General Assembly 2015). In this fashion, the Presbyterian Church has worked in coalition with the Catholic Church, expressing a view that future Assembly

votes on same-sex marriage should not be whipped (BBC News NI 2015). This furthers the narrative that they are not against equality, but believe the issue is a matter of conscience

In summary, the Presbyterian Church has engaged with MLAs through an insider strategy and with the public debate through a responsible outsider strategy. The Assembly has not amended marriage law, but the Church's position has been vigorously challenged, particularly in the public sphere. Reflecting this challenging political environment, the margin against the legislation in the Assembly has diminished over time. For instance, without the DUP's petition of concern in November 2015,<sup>73</sup> the legislation would have passed.

#### 6.2.3.1.3 Constitutional Issues

The Presbyterian Church pursues an insider strategy when engaging with constitutional issues. The evidence suggests that the Church is cautious in this policy area, but is well received by decision makers.

The Presbyterian Church has pursued an insider strategy in its engagement with constitutional issues engaging with a raft of consultation processes and meeting with decision makers. For instance, the Church met with the political parties ahead of the St. Andrew's discussions in 2006 (see General Assembly 2006: 18, General Assembly 2007: 15-17). The Church has also given evidence as part of formal consultation processes regarding policing, the future of the Civic Forum and the issue of parades. In relation to policing and justice, the Church put forward a defined position regarding the need to include Sinn Féin

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<sup>73</sup> In 2012 there were 45 Ayes and 50 Noes, in 2013 46 Ayes and 51 Noes, in 2014 43 Ayes and 51 Noes, in April 2015 47 Ayes and 49 Noes (see NI Assembly Hansard (2012) 01/10/12, 29/04/13 (see NI Assembly Hansard 2013), 29/04/14 and 27/04/15a (see NI Assembly Hansard 2015a). However, in November (see NI Assembly Hansard 2015b), there were 53 Ayes and 52 noes but it did not pass because the DUP utilised the Petition of Concern mechanism.



within the policing structures and Police Board (General Assembly 2007: 16). Likewise, the Church offered a nuanced position regarding the devolution of policing and justice, while noting its reservation about the recommendation for 50:50 police recruitment (General Assembly 2008: 36). Then, when responding to the 'Temporary Recruitment Provision' consultation in 2011, the Church called for an end to 50:50 policing in Northern Ireland once the numbers had reached what the Patten report considered 'acceptable' (Presbyterian Church in Ireland 2011). The Church also offered detailed recommendations in response to the reform of the Civic Forum in 2009, proposing reduction in its membership, widening of the forum's remit to include societal issues as well as commitment from politicians to engage with the forum's work (General Assembly 2009: 80-81). Likewise in 2013, the Church met with the former American diplomat Richard Hass (Presbyterian Church in Ireland 2013) who chaired talks on parading, flags and 'the past'. Here, the Church recommended devolving determinations on contested parades so as to bring local accountability and responsibility to the issue (Hamilton 2013).

Despite this insider engagement, the perception that the Church has not been active in its engagement with constitutional issues since 1998 is found both within the Presbyterian Church and amongst unionist politicians. One senior representative of the Presbyterian Church noted in an interview that it had lacked the capacity to deal with big constitutional issues post 1998, with the Church having taken its 'eye off the ball'.<sup>74</sup> Further to this, another respondent from the Church noted that it had moved from a world where it was clear of its position against violence to a much more nuanced and confused world after 1998.<sup>75</sup> Likewise, a Unionist MLA argued that the Church was fearful of 'writing anything

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<sup>74</sup> Interview with senior representative of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

<sup>75</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

down' because this could reveal internal disagreement within the Church<sup>76</sup> and an Alliance MLA noted his frustration at the lack of detail provided on constitutional issues in comparison to issues such as same-sex marriage.<sup>77</sup>

While these perception would suggest that Brewer et al's (2011: 99-100) pre-1998 criticism that the Church desensitised politics, relying on vague pronouncements, still stands post 1998, the evidence also signals that these perceptions may be unfair, with the Church having engaged with numerous consultation processes.

In sum, the Presbyterian Church pursues an insider strategy with constitutional issues. Despite the perception that the Church has been inactive on constitutional issues since 1998, there is evidence which signals that the Church's insider engagement has been relatively widespread. The evidence also reveals the willingness of political parties and commission chairs to meet Church representatives, suggesting that it is seen as an important stakeholder on constitutional issues, receiving specialist insider status.

### 6.2.3.2 The Catholic Church in Ireland

The Catholic Church pursues an insider strategy in each of the policy areas under study, supplementing this strategy with a responsible outsider strategy when necessary. The Catholic Church has specialist insider status conferred upon it in each of the policy areas.

#### 6.2.3.2.1 Education

The Catholic Church has used an insider strategy in its engagement with education policy. This can be seen clearly in the way the Church has engaged with the Executive's

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<sup>76</sup> Interview with Ulster Unionist Party MLA (August 17<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Alliance Party MLA (August 14<sup>th</sup> 2015).

Review of Public Administration. In doing this, the Church has defended its specialist insider status in education.

An important part of the gains made by the Catholic Church in education during the twentieth century was the creation of the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools (CCMS). However, the Review of Public Administration which began in 2002 threatened the statutory role of CCMS. The original re-organisation proposed the creation of a new sectoral body for Catholic maintained schools, but the Church feared that the new body's lack of statutory status would mean that it would not be sufficiently consulted by decision makers. In light of this, the Church feared a downsizing in its specialist insider status in education. The Church also feared that it would not have the same level of influence in school employment.

In order to defend the privileged status of CCMS, the Church engaged with decision makers through an insider strategy. In 2006, staff from CCMS, along with representatives from the Catholic Heads' Association, met with the representatives from the Department of Education on the request of the Archbishop to ensure that the role of Trustees, as owners of schools and as a legitimate interest in education, would be guaranteed within the re-organisation (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools 2006/7: 24). Once power-sharing government resumed in Northern Ireland, the Catholic Church continued to pursue its insider strategy. Cardinal Brady gave evidence to the Assembly's Education Committee in 2009. This was the first time the highest ranking cleric of the Church gave evidence to the committee (Irish News 2009a), highlighting the Church's concern, which was widely covered in the media (BBC News 2009, Irish Times 2009). He argued that any new sectoral body should have a role in ownership and appointing teachers and governing bodies should have a duty to consult the sectoral body:

Policy and/or legislation provision needs to be made for their (the sectoral body) role in supporting schools in the appointment of teachers particularly at the leadership level, their role on behalf of school(s) owners in the planning and provision(s) of schools, the advocacy role on behalf of a given sector and their role in supporting and developing ethos. Similarly there is no point in having support bodies if they can be ignored by the schools in that sector (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2009a).

The Cardinal continued his engagement through a responsible outsider strategy, when giving a Homily at the opening of St. Patrick's College in Dungannon, calling on political representatives to remove the significant threat posed to Catholic education by the Education Bill. He then called on Catholics in Northern Ireland to lobby their political representatives in this regard (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2009b).

When the Education Bill was re-drafted in 2012, the appointment of staff returned to boards of governors and the role of the sectoral bodies was written into the legislation as desired. However, with the Bill's failure to gain cross-community support it had to be re-drafted again in 2014. At this point, CCMS gave further evidence to the Assembly's education committee, referring the need for the sectoral body to continue having an aspect of employment in its role (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools 2014c). In the final legislation, CCMS was retained as a statutory body with the right to prepare and submit schemes of employment and management (McCarry 2015).

It is not possible to directly connect the Catholic Church's lobbying with the Minister's decision to uphold CCMS' statutory status with a role in employment, but the Church defended its status and role within education through both an insider and responsible

outsider strategy, and its objective was met in the final legislation. The post 1998 period has seen the Catholic Church transition from its twentieth century battle for state funded Catholic education, to defending its specialist insider status within education policy and provision.

#### 6.2.3.2.2 Same-Sex Marriage

The Catholic Church has also utilised an insider strategy in relation to same-sex marriage, by lobbying political parties. The Church has supplemented this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy through the media, working in coalition with the Presbyterian Church.

The Catholic Church has pursued an insider strategy by contacting MLAs to request that they vote against the legislation on numerous occasions and inviting a discussion between MLAs and Church representatives (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2014, 2015a). This insider engagement has been well received by MLAs, with many referencing the Church's position in the Chamber<sup>78</sup> and using the Church's position as a way of legitimising their opposition to the Bill. Further to this, the Catholic Church has put pressure on the nationalist political parties, demonstrating that the Church is willing to look elsewhere for support on moral issues which it believes are important. The relationship between the DUP and the Church has been developing over time (Bowcott 2006) but has become more public in recent times. In 2011, the Bishops' Conference called on its members to challenge political parties canvassing for their votes on what they would do to support the institution of marriage and the family in the Assembly election (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2011a). This suggests that the Catholic Church is willing to suggest to its members that

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<sup>78</sup> See NI Assembly Hansard 2012: 17, NI Assembly Hansard 2013: 19,21, NI Assembly Hansard 2014: 19, NI Assembly Hansard 2014: 22, NI Assembly 2015a Hansard: 18-19

challenging its traditional political parties, and possibly changing one's vote, is something that should be considered.

Likewise, the DUP has also been eager to capitalise on the situation by signalling its willingness to work with the Catholic Church on moral issues (see Tonge et al 2014: 181-182). For instance, the DUP quoted high profile Catholics in the 2014 same-sex marriage debate (Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2014: 44) using these opportunities to send a message that conservative Catholic voters should consider voting for the DUP. Storey noted:

Many in the Roman Catholic community feel let down and indeed betrayed by their political representatives. They are turning to this party as the only party in this Assembly that takes a clear and unambiguous stand on the issue'. (Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2014: 20).

The DUP has realised that it can use its common position on same-sex marriage for political gain. In light of this both the party and the Church have identified one another as strategic partners.

The Catholic Church has supplemented this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy, attempting to shape the public narrative through the media, at times in coalition with the Presbyterian Church (BBC News NI 2015). Like the Presbyterian Church, it has faced the claim that it is anti-equality. The Church has attempted to counter this by developing a narrative on the principle of 'conscience', arguing that the 'equality' agenda discriminates against those who oppose same-sex marriage, by simply swapping one form of discrimination for another (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2015b). The Church has also sought to challenge the notion of equality by arguing that it is not discrimination to deny

marriage to a distinct type of relationship (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2014). The Church's engagement with the public debate is quite articulate, but it is firmly based in the Church's theological understanding of the purpose of marriage for procreation, and is therefore unlikely to have reach beyond the Church's conservative base.

In sum, the Catholic Church has pursued an insider strategy which it has supplemented with a responsible outsider strategy through the media. The Church's position has been respected within the Chamber, and has found a powerful ally in the DUP, but the Church has found it difficult to shape the public debate. Same-sex marriage has not been made legal in Northern Ireland, but it would have passed were it not for the DUP's petition of concern in November 2015.<sup>79</sup>

#### 6.2.3.2.3 Constitutional Issues

The Church has pursued an insider strategy of meeting with political parties and members of the Executive to discuss constitutional issues. It has also utilised a responsible outsider strategy, using public opportunities to take part in the debate regarding Northern Ireland's constitutional situation, which has also been picked up by the media.

Post 1998, the Catholic Church has continued its practice of representing the Catholic community in relation to Northern Ireland's constitutional settlement through an insider strategy of meeting with political representatives. The pinnacle of this engagement was reached in 2006 when Archbishop Brady met DUP leader Ian Paisley ahead of talks in St. Andrews (Bowcott 2006). In doing this, it widened its insider strategy, demonstrating its

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<sup>79</sup> In 2012 there were 45 Ayes and 50 Noes, in 2013 46 Ayes and 51 Noes, in 2014 43 Ayes and 51 Noes, in April 2015 47 Ayes and 49 Noes (see NI Assembly Hansard 2012 01/10/12, 29/04/13 (see Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2013), 29/04/14 (see Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2014 )and 27/04/15) (Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2015a). However, in November 2015 (see Northern Ireland Assembly Hansard 2015b), there were 53 Ayes and 52 noes but it did not pass because the DUP utilised the Petition of Concern mechanism.

preparedness to work with both sides of the political divide. The Church has also engaged as an insider in relation to the issue of policing in Northern Ireland. Archbishop Brady has taken an interest in policing during the devolved period, attending and speaking at the Northern Ireland policing board (Irish Catholic Bishop's Conference 2004c). In 2011, NICCOSA provided recommendations on the retention of 50:50 policing for Northern Ireland's Police Service (PSNI), special recruitment and the need for greater representation of Catholics in senior roles (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2011b).

The Church has also engaged with constitutional issues through a responsible outsider strategy. In the early years of political devolution, before the 2002-7 suspension, it encouraged politicians and extended goodwill to those who were working positively for peace (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2001a). This extended beyond press releases, to clerics using public opportunities to offer support for peace (see Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2001b). During suspension, Archbishop Brady used the re-opening of the Garvaghy Road Parish Church in Drumcree, which was embroiled in one of Belfast's most hostile sectarian standoffs, to encourage stakeholders in the peace process to 'grasp the good opportunity' for an agreement (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2004a). At times, these statements have gone beyond support, to denounce the unionist community. In 2004, Brady noted what he saw as unionist leaders, British politicians and the media failing to treat loyalist paramilitaries with the same 'vigour' as republican paramilitaries (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2004b). However, public statements of encouragement and support for decommissioning continued throughout the period of suspension right up to the St. Andrew's Agreement in 2006 (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2005, CAIN 2006). This also continued post agreement, as the Church looked to encourage parties to move towards



peace (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2007) as the decommissioning process continued (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2009c, 2010a, 2010b). The Church also utilised a responsible outsider strategy in relation to policing by vocally demonstrating its support for the devolution of policing and justice in 2010 (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2010c). It has also been vocal in its support for the Hass Talks regarding flags, parades and 'the past' (BBC News NI 2014).

The Church has been vocal on constitutional issues, but its public support for the political process and decommissioning could be viewed as tokenistic and vague, producing encouragement rather than solutions. Similarly to the case of the Presbyterian Church, this may suggest that Brewer et al's (2011: 99-100) pre-1998 criticism that the Church desensitised politics, relying on vague pronouncements on constitutional issues, still stands post 1998. However, it is also important to remember that the Catholic Church's voice has been part of consolidating support for a volatile political process. The Church has pursued a dual role of resolving tensions whilst also engaging with politicians so as to influence the constitutional agenda.

In conclusion, the Catholic Church has pursued an insider strategy, supplemented by an outsider strategy in relation to constitutional issues. The Church uses key opportunities to speak out in favour of Northern Ireland's political process and to defend the Catholic community in Northern Ireland. The Church's involvement on constitutional issues is well received by decision makers, and its voice has been part of consolidating support for political devolution and hence has led to specialist insider status conferred upon it.

### 6.2.3.3 The Belfast Islamic Centre

The Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC) pursues an insider strategy in the limited engagement it has had with education policy and constitutional issues. It does not perceive same-sex marriage as an issue of concern to the Muslim community and hence has not engaged on this issue.

#### 6.2.3.3.1 Education

The BIC has engaged with the Executive through an insider approach through some consultation processes and informal discussions, but it also engaged with education policy in an insider fashion in coalition with other faith communities who are part of the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum (NIIF). The BIC, working with NIIF, has seen some small changes in religious education policy in line with its requests. Within a political context dominated by the churches' interests, this is no small feat and hence while the BIC does not have specialist or core insider status, its status is not wholly peripheral.

Interview respondents from the BIC noted that while it tries to engage with the Executive's consultation processes, it is difficult because the Centre relies on volunteers and limited staff capacity.<sup>80</sup> Even so, the BIC responded to the consultation on the Draft Cohesion, Sharing and Integration programme to call on the government to 'diversify the curriculum' so as to include non-Christian religion in religious education (Belfast Islamic Centre 2010). Likewise, a politician who had responsibility for education also noted that she had discussions with the BIC and the wider Muslim community regarding the religious education curriculum when she was in office.<sup>81</sup> Despite these insider opportunities, the BIC does not have a position on the religious education drafting group which is composed of the main Christian denominations (see Richardson 2014: 210).

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>81</sup> Interview with a former minister of the Northern Ireland Executive (July 13<sup>th</sup> 2015).

However, the Centre also engages in education policy through NIIF which was set to lobby government to include a religious education core syllabus sensitive to non-Christian religions (see Richardson 2002: 15). Traditionally, the mainstream Christian denominations have kept religious education in Northern Ireland confessional<sup>82</sup> with little reference to 'world religions', but NIIF has sought to challenge this consensus (see Richardson 2002). NIIF lobbies the Churches and the Executive (Richardson 2014: 216), taking part in consultations on the religious education curriculum, in order to highlight this agenda.

In 2007, the Education Minister, Caitriona Ruane, brought in an aspect of 'World Religion' to the Key Stage 3 core syllabus (Northern Ireland Curriculum 2007). Much of the planning behind this happened during Direct Rule, with the Northern Ireland Office engaging with NIIF among other groups (Department of Education NI 2006). NIIF lobbied for a wider recognition of non-Christian religions through the consultation process (Department of Education NI 2006, NIIF 2010). The Churches, which make up the review board, have traditionally opposed a change of this kind (General Assembly 2001, Richardson 2014: 210). Even so, the change was ultimately introduced (Department of Education NI undated). The NIIF's insider engagement in this policy area, along with a Minister keen to see change and sympathetic to NIIF's agenda,<sup>83</sup> brought a small change in education policy. This signals a level of success on the part of NIIF, and organisations such as the BIC which make up its membership, but the change to the curriculum only requires schools to teach 'World Religion' as a minor part of the wider religious education curriculum, and only at Key Stage 3 (Richardson 2014: 217).

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<sup>82</sup> Or what Richardson (2002: 12) refers to as 'non-denominational neo-confessionalism'.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with a former minister of the Northern Ireland Executive (July 13<sup>th</sup> 2015). Caitriona Ruane's support for minority communities in education has also been report widely elsewhere. For instance, see Cheney (2008).

Even so, the BIC has engaged with education policy through NIIF in an insider fashion. In coalition with other faith communities, the BIC has had some success in amending the religious education curriculum in a political context where the churches are powerful. Even so, while ‘world religion’ is now part of the curriculum, non-Christian FBOs are not part of the review board which sets this aspect of the curriculum. Therefore, the BIC does not have specialist or core insider status in education, but its status is not wholly peripheral either.

#### 6.2.3.3.2 Same-Sex Marriage

The BIC has not engaged with same-sex marriage legislation. It is therefore not possible to categorise the organisation’s strategy or status in this area. Even so, the fact that the BIC has not engaged on this issue signals the difference between the BIC and other FBOs in Northern Ireland. The Muslim community’s lack of capacity and minority status within Northern Ireland society means it is more interested in issues which it perceives as directly influencing the Muslim community in Northern Ireland than wider moral or societal questions affecting Northern Ireland society.

Respondents from the BIC, and others from the Muslim community were clear in interviews that they did not see same-sex marriage as an issue which required its engagement.<sup>84</sup> When asked whether the organisation had engaged with the debate surrounding same-sex marriage, they reacted with surprise at the question. Respondents from the BIC noted that it was not something considered important or a priority.<sup>85</sup> It is likely that a lack of capacity plays a role here, but it is also important to note the BIC’s tendency to focus on issues which it sees as important to its members as an explanatory factor. This

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<sup>84</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015) and interview with key respondents from the Muslim community in Northern Ireland (July 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).

<sup>85</sup> Interview with senior respondents from the Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015).

indicates that the BIC sees itself as an organisation that represents Muslims, rather than an organisation which comments on wider societal debates. This understanding means the BIC does not feel the need to act as the moral arbiter of Northern Ireland society. This may well come from the Muslim community's minority identity within Northern Ireland society, with representatives from the Muslim community<sup>86</sup> noting that they were not interested in 'dampening down' the campaigns and pursuits of other groups.

#### 6.2.3.3.3 Constitutional Issues

As was noted previously, the Muslim community in Northern Ireland has traditionally avoided discussing constitutional issues. However, since power was devolved to Northern Ireland in 1998, the BIC, as a representative of the Muslim community, has engaged as an insider, taking part in consultation processes with the Northern Ireland's police board (NI Policing Board 2011) and on community cohesion (see Belfast Islamic Centre 2010), but has not engaged beyond this. The way in which constitutional debates are framed in Northern Ireland make it difficult for groups like the BIC to fully engage. As Conrad (2008: 111-138) has noted, Northern Ireland's 'two communities' model means that the 'community' in Northern Ireland signifies the unionist/Protestant and nationalist/Catholic communities, limiting access to politics by legitimising very particular, binary, understandings of Northern Ireland. This makes it difficult for communities such as the Muslim community to locate the space for engagement. This was reflected in the words of a key informant from the Muslim community who, when discussing the way in which the community is perceived by politicians, noted:

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<sup>86</sup> Interview with key respondents from the Muslim community in Northern Ireland (July 9<sup>th</sup> 2015). This individual is not a representative of the BIC, but has in the past had involvement with the BIC.

they don't ask us to take sides, that has never happened. They don't put that pressure on us. Maybe they know that it makes no difference to them what side we are on because we are such a small number, it doesn't really make any difference to them.<sup>87</sup>

These findings indicate that Wilford and Wilson's (2003: 15) suggestions that minority groups such as the Muslim community might become the 'cement' between the two ethnic blocks are far from being realised. In light of this, while the BIC has engaged to a certain extent with constitutional issues through an insider strategy, it is in reality peripheral in constitutional debates.

#### 6.2.3.4 The Caleb Foundation

The Caleb Foundation pursues an insider strategy in each of the policy areas under study, supplementing this to a certain extent with a responsible outsider strategy when engaging on the issue of same-sex marriage. The Caleb Foundation's lack of capacity and controversial policy agenda means that it receives a peripheral insider status in each of the policy areas.

##### 6.2.3.4.1 Education

The Caleb Foundation engages with education policy through an insider strategy. However, its engagement is severely limited by its lack of internal capacity owing to its voluntary based political advocacy structure. In light of this, the Caleb Foundation's strategy reflects that of a peripheral insider in education.

The Caleb Foundation's interest in education policy during the devolved period has focused upon the niche area of 'intelligent design'. For instance, the Caleb Foundation has

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<sup>87</sup> Interview with key informant from the Muslim community in Northern Ireland (July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015).

lobbied the Ulster Museum to include intelligent design in its 'nature zone' (Crawley 2010) and likewise lobbied the National Trust to include it as part of its exhibition at the visitor's centre at Giant's Causeway (see Jones 2012). Further to this, the Caleb Foundation also favours the teaching of 'intelligent design' as part of Northern Ireland's curriculum (Ganiel 2008a: 111, Jones 2012 and Clarke 2012). Ganiel (2008a: 111) notes in her research that Caleb has engaged with education officials regarding the teaching of 'intelligent design' in Northern Ireland's schools, but a respondent from Caleb stated that it had not engaged with the Education Department due to a 'lack of resources'.<sup>88</sup>

Caleb lacks the internal capacity to lobby the Department for Education directly, but a member of Caleb's Council of Reference has been active in doing so in an insider capacity. DUP MLA, and former chair of the Assembly's Education Committee, Mervyn Storey, lobbied the Sinn Féin Education Minister, Caitriona Ruane, on the issue of 'intelligent design' in both 2007 and 2008 (Sheeran 2007 and Dumigan 2008). Framing the question in terms of Northern Ireland's equality agenda, Storey asked the Minister whether teachers might use their own judgment on whether non-evolutionary explanations of the origin and development of life merited discussion in the classroom. The Minister noted that alternatives to evolution would be better discussed in religious education rather than science classes (McCrory and Murphy 2009: 374). Storey was engaging in his capacity as a politician, rather than as a member of Caleb's Council of Reference, but it is difficult to disconnect the two roles.

Ruane did not dismiss 'intelligent design' outright, but the Minister noted that it had no place in science and hence Caleb has not seen its agenda met, despite Storey's position

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with respondent from the Caleb Foundation (July 2015).

as Chair of the Education Committee. Storey, and other DUP MLAs may support ‘intelligent design’, but this position is not supported throughout the DUP (see Tonge et al 2014: 143-144), and hence it is not wholly surprising that it has gained little traction in education policy in Northern Ireland. The niche and controversial nature of its agenda also means that it is unlikely to become part of the curriculum in a consociational political system designed to force compromise rather than polarising policy positions.

The Caleb Foundation’s limited engagement with education policy in Northern Ireland is due to its limited capacity to engage politically due to its voluntary political advocacy structure. One of its members has been in a powerful position as Chair of the Education Committee, and has pursued an issue of interest to Caleb through an insider strategy, but no change in Northern Ireland’s curriculum has come about. In this respect, the Caleb Foundation is at best a peripheral insider in education policy in Northern Ireland.

#### 6.2.3.4.2 Same-Sex Marriage

The Caleb Foundation has attempted to engage with the same-sex marriage debate through both an insider and an outsider strategy. However, its lack of capacity for engagement means that it has not been a visible actor in this area.

According to a respondent from the Caleb Foundation,<sup>89</sup> the organisation has engaged in an insider fashion by meeting with DUP representatives to voice its concerns. However, unlike the Presbyterian Church and the Catholic Church, the Caleb Foundation was not used to legitimise the position of MLAs during the same-sex marriage debate in the Chamber. This cannot be used to definitively argue that the Caleb Foundation has not had an influence in this area, but it does suggest that decision makers do not see it as a FBO

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Caleb Foundation (July 2015)



which can be used to add support to their argument, unlike the Presbyterian and Catholic churches. The Caleb Foundation's outsider engagement has also been muted. The organisation has attempted to gain media attention through releasing statements of opposition to same-sex marriage (Caleb Foundation 2014), but it has received minimal visibility within the media.

There are a number of factors which potentially contribute to this lack of engagement. Firstly, the Foundation's voluntary based political advocacy structure which, as was noted previously, has only one active individual, means it does not have the capacity for engagement. The congruence between Caleb's agenda, and the agenda of some DUP MLAs, means that it can meet with the DUP, but meeting with MLAs from a range of political parties would require a time investment that might not be possible for an organisation without paid staff and with few volunteers. Further to this, the Foundation's fundamentalist theological and political position makes it difficult for it to relate to MLAs from major parties beyond the DUP. Finally, both MLAs and the media are unlikely to pick up on Caleb's opposition to same-sex marriage when the Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church, organisations which are far more representative of Northern Ireland society than the Caleb Foundation, are also opposed to amending Northern Ireland's marriage law. An absence of distinctiveness in this area most likely contributes to its lack of interest from decision makers and the press.

In summary, the Caleb Foundation has engaged with the same-sex marriage debate through both an insider and responsible outsider strategy. However a lack of capacity, distinctiveness and its fundamentalist theological position makes it difficult for the Caleb

Foundation to access decision makers and the public debate, and it is because of this that it receives peripheral insider status in the area of same-sex marriage.

#### 6.2.3.4.3 Constitutional Issues

The Caleb Foundation has engaged with constitutional issues in a limited fashion through an insider strategy. However, Caleb has avoided engaging with questions surrounding power-sharing government in Northern Ireland, due to disagreement among its members regarding whether the DUP should share power with Sinn Féin.

The Caleb Foundation has pursued an insider strategy, responding to some consultations regarding proposed legislation such as the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (2010). Furthermore, Caleb has successfully lobbied for a position on Northern Ireland's Civic Forum, despite disapproving of its ethos and purpose (Ganiel 2008a: 112). However, as noted previously, this access point was short lived. However, Caleb has avoided questions of power-sharing in Northern Ireland. This is due to a division amongst Caleb's supporters over whether Ian Paisley should have agreed to share power with Sinn Féin in 2007. Many supporters of Caleb are unhappy about the power-sharing arrangement. For instance, Traditionalist Unionist Voice (TUV) MLA and supporter of the Caleb Foundation, Jim Allister, has been critical of Caleb for failing to frame the DUP's decision to share power with Sinn Féin as a moral question of whether the DUP should share power with those formerly involved with the IRA (Clarke 2012). However, other members are keen to take advantage of the opportunity to lobby the DUP within the executive.<sup>90</sup> Because of this divide, Caleb avoids articulating a clear position on power-sharing in Northern Ireland. This can be seen in a Caleb press release (Caleb Foundation undated b).

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<sup>90</sup> Interview with senior respondent from the Caleb Foundation (July 2015).

From time to time, the question of the stance of the Caleb Foundation towards the present power-sharing arrangements at Stormont has been raised, both enquiringly and critically. While many individual members of the Council of Caleb Foundation have decided views on this subject (and these would vary one from another), Caleb as an organisation does not. The reason for this is that the purpose of Caleb is not to comment on who occupies positions of government and whether or not they should do so. Rather, its purpose is to lobby the powers that be, whoever they may be, on matters of policy which relate to Biblical doctrine and ethics and which are of concern to all evangelical Christians.

In summary, the Caleb Foundation has engaged with some constitutional issues through an insider strategy with consultation processes. However, it has avoided engaging in debates regarding Northern Ireland's power-sharing agreement.

#### 6.2.4 Strategy: Analysis

Each FBO has pursued an insider strategy to different extents in each of the policy areas under investigation. This indicates that FBOs perceive Northern Ireland's political system as open for engagement. The Presbyterian Church, Catholic Church and Caleb Foundation have supplemented their insider strategies with responsible outsider strategies through the media when necessary. However, the strongly rooted FBOs utilise this outsider strategy in a much fuller sense than the weakly rooted organisations. The findings also point to numerous examples of coalition building in salient policy areas, where FBOs perceive opposition to their agenda and when FBOs share internal resources to reach common goals.

Organisations such as the Presbyterian and Catholic churches supplement an insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy because it is prudent for these strongly rooted

organisations to do so. They can attract media attention because they are representative of a large number of people, and have traditionally been expected to speak for their respective communities, particularly on social, moral and constitutional issues. The BIC and the Caleb Foundation on the other hand are much less representative of Northern Ireland society. The strongly rooted FBOs also have the capacity to maximise a responsible outsider strategy. The Presbyterian's Council for Church in Society, which has recently appointed a policy officer, and the Catholic Church's NICCOSA, which also has full time staff working on policy, can attract press attention in a way that the BIC and the Caleb Foundation's political advocacy structures do not allow.

The findings also reflect Binderkrantz's (2005: 710) findings that organisations supplement their insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy when an issue is controversial or the FBO believes it will receive a high level of opposition. This is seen most clearly on the issue of same-sex marriage. The environment in which the churches engage is challenging, with a high level of opposition from political parties and civil society organisations in favour of amending Northern Ireland's marriage law. In response to this, the Presbyterian and Catholic churches have utilised a responsible outsider strategy to try and shape the debate. Likewise when CCMS was under threat, Cardinal Brady used a public event at the opening of a school in Dungannon to speak out publicly against the Education Bill and to encourage Catholics to lobby their political representatives. On constitutional issues, the churches utilise a responsible outsider strategy because the stakes are high. By speaking out publicly, it is possible to shape the narrative and play a role in moving Northern Ireland society forward. This is akin to the 'elastic band leadership' and 'leash leadership' role Brewer et al (2011: 98) note as indicative of the churches' engagement pre-

1998. Some churches also take advantage of particularly high stake events, such as the re-opening of the Garvaghy Road Parish Church in Drumcree, to encourage power-sharing and the continuation of the political process, knowing that these are opportunities that can shape the political debate.

The findings also provide a number of examples of coalition building. In the case of same-sex marriage, the findings evidence what Scholzman and Tierney (1986: 49) refer to as a 'strange bedfellow coalition' between the Catholic Church and the DUP. Coalition formation was also found between the Catholic and Presbyterian churches. This example of coalition furthers scholars' claims that organisations form coalitions on salient issues (Mahoney and Baumgartner 2004) or issues which are likely to cause conflict between interests (Heinz et al 1993, Mahoney 2007). The findings also point to the Presbyterian Church's broad coalition building with the other Protestant denominations and the unionist political parties in the area of education. By building this broad coalition, the organisations were able to show that their position was widely representative of a large share of Northern Ireland society and in doing so maximised the likelihood of seeing their desired outcome. This furthers the claim of Hula (1999: 25-26) who argues that coalitions are built to increase the likelihood of an interest achieving its desired outcome. Similarly, the BIC works in coalition with other minority faith communities and those sympathetic to widening the religious education curriculum. This allows the BIC to engage politically to a certain extent despite its lack of capacity. This also furthers the claims of Hula (1999: 25-26) and likewise strengthens Whitford's (2003: 45) claim that coalitions can be used so as to assemble minority interests into 'more powerful blocks'.

There is a contrast between the status received by strongly rooted organisations and less strongly rooted organisations in the case of Northern Ireland. The strongly rooted FBOs have received specialist or core insider status in each policy area, but the weakly rooted FBOs have not. Although the BIC's role in education is not wholly peripheral, it has not had core or specialist insider status conferred upon it, in any policy area.

The Presbyterian Church and the Catholic Church receive specialist insider status in each of the policy areas due to the specific resources they possess and their position within Northern Ireland society. A number of the specific resources which Maloney et al (1994: 29) identify as key for an organisation to possess if it wishes to have core or specialist insider status conferred upon it are possessed by the Presbyterian and Catholic churches. For instance, the Catholic Church has 'implementation power' because it provides thousands of school places in Northern Ireland. The Presbyterian Church and Catholic Church's position within society also ensure it receives specialist or core insider status in education. The unionist parties recognise the Protestant churches as representative of the unionist community giving their support in defending their core insider status. Ultimately, the Education Minister could only pass the Education Bill once the role of the Presbyterian Church and other Protestant denominations had been secured. In the case of same-sex marriage and on constitutional issues, the churches possess what Maloney et al (1994: 29) refers to as a 'representative base'. This is illustrated by a number of MLAs referencing the churches so as to legitimise their opposition to same-sex marriage. Similarly, the churches are recognised by decision makers such as the Executive and the chairs of commissions as representative voices on a wide range of constitutional issues.

The BIC and the Caleb Foundation's peripheral insider status can be explained by their lack of specific resources and their position within Northern Ireland society. Neither FBO has identified clear resources desired by decision makers, and hence cannot take part in the exchange based relationship that Maloney et al (1994: 23) argue is essential if an organisation is to have specialist or core insider status conferred upon it. Furthermore, their position within society does not provide them with specialist or core insider status either. In the case of the BIC, this is magnified by Northern Ireland's 'two communities' model which frustrates the BIC's political engagement. A lack of government sponsored political structures which provide access for the BIC to decision makers in a wide range of policy areas also inhibits the BIC's participation. The 'Community Faiths' Forum' exists, but as noted previously, this is limited in the policy areas it covers. This disadvantage is further perpetuated by the lack of full time staff focusing on political engagement. Finally, theological orientation also plays a role in explaining Caleb's peripheral insider status. The findings indicate that Caleb has quite irregular views in education regarding the teaching of 'intelligent design', which are based on a literal and fundamentalist theological position.

In summary, each FBO has pursued an insider strategy. Three of the FBOs have supplemented this with a responsible outsider strategy, but the strongly rooted FBOs pursue a much fuller responsible outsider strategy than the weakly rooted FBOs. This fuller responsible outsider strategy is driven by the capacity of the organisations and their position in Northern Ireland society, which ensures they receive media attention. The outsider strategy is used when the policy issue being engaged with is controversial, as seen with same-sex marriage, and when the stakes are high as with constitutional issues. Coalition is a strategy utilised when the policy issue is salient, when there is conflict between interests

and in order to signal that a political agenda is widely representative of Northern Ireland society. The strongly rooted FBOs have had specialist insider status conferred upon them by decision makers, while the weakly rooted FBOs receive peripheral insider status. The specific resources or lack of specific resources possessed by the organisations, and their position within society explain these conflicting statuses. In the case of the Caleb Foundation, its less moderate theological orientation is also an explanatory factor, while a political system dominated by the two major communities is an explanatory factor in the case of the BIC.

#### 6.2.5 Effectiveness

Having examined the political advocacy structures and strategies of the FBOs under study, this section considers the evidence in relation to the third secondary research question outlined in Chapter 4, which asks:

‘Are faith-based organisations at the sub-state level in the UK well placed to act as effective pressure groups in the decision making process?’

The criterion of effectiveness outlined in Chapter 4 is used to study this question in relation to each FBO. The section indicates that there is a contrast between strongly rooted FBOs which are well placed to act as effective pressure groups, and weakly rooted FBOs which are much less well placed to do so. This is explained by the staff-based political advocacy structures and status possessed by the strongly rooted FBOs, in contrast to the lack of staff capacity and peripheral status of the weakly rooted FBOs.



#### 6.2.5.1 Presbyterian Church in Ireland

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. In relation to the criterion, it has a political advocacy structure which is well suited for engaging with the devolved institutions in Northern Ireland, it has coherent policy positions, it is consulted widely, it has core or specialist insider status conferred upon it and it has seen a number of its objectives met.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland's political advocacy structure is well suited for a devolved context with an emphasis on policy consultation (Chaney 2011: 264). Having adapted its political advocacy structure and increased its capacity in response to political devolution, its staff are able to engage with the detail of policy, as well as utilise the Chair of the Council for Church in Society in a responsible outsider fashion.

The Presbyterian Church's effectiveness is also heightened by its coherent policy positions which are developed through the Council of Church in Society and endorsed through its report to the General Assembly on an annual basis. The Church has been clear in its objectives to defend its position on the Education Authority and to oppose same-sex marriage. The Church's public position on constitutional issues has been more vague, but the evidence it has provided on constitutional issues through consultation processes has been more coherent. As regards to consultation, the evidence indicates that the Church is widely consulted by decision makers as it has received access to the Executive, MLAs, political parties and chairs of commissions. The Presbyterian Church has received specialist or core insider status in each of the policy areas under study. As noted previously, the specific resources it possesses and its position within Northern Ireland's society both historically and currently, both contribute to this status.

Finally, the Church is well placed to act as an effective pressure group, with its objectives met in most cases. The Church's engagement in education is the most compelling example with the Church engaging with decision makers to defend its right of representation within Northern Ireland's educational structures and seeing its objectives met. Likewise, the Assembly has not voted for same-sex marriage in line with the objective of the Presbyterian Church. However, the growing support for same-sex marriage amongst MLAs could jeopardise this objective in future. On constitutional issues, the Church has seen policing devolved to Northern Ireland and an end to 50:50 policing in 2011 (BBC News NI 2011) in line with its agenda, but it has not seen a reformed Civic Forum.

The evidence suggests that the Church has seen what MacKay et al (2005: 10) refer to as 'concrete changes in policy outcomes' in education and has had a 'legitimate voice' in Northern Ireland's constitutional and same-sex marriage debates, but has not succeeded in 'provoking reconsideration of the way others think' in relation to same-sex marriage. Therefore, while the Church has come under pressure in the same-sex marriage debate and has not always articulated the clearest message on constitutional issues, it is well placed to act as an effective pressure group.

#### 6.2.5.2. The Catholic Church in Ireland

The Catholic Church in Ireland is well placed to act as an effective pressure group. With regards to the criterion, its staff based political advocacy structure is appropriate for engaging with the devolved institution in Northern Ireland, it has coherent policy positions, is widely consulted by decision makers, has core or specialist insider status conferred upon it and has seen a number of its objectives met.

The Catholic Church's political advocacy is well suited for Northern Ireland's devolved context where, as noted previously, policy consultation is emphasised. The creation of NICCOSA and the appointment of a member of staff for the purpose of engaging with the devolved institution allows it to engage with the Executive's policy consultations while supporting its bishops in their public pronouncement through research and press statements.

The Catholic Church has coherent policy positions which its bishops develop at the Irish Bishop's Council with assistance from the Council's secretariat. The Church's position in defence of CCMS' statutory role with responsibility for appointments was clearly articulated through meetings with the Executive, the Education Committee and through public pronouncement. Likewise, the Church was clear in its opposition to same-sex marriage. As with the Presbyterian Church, the Catholic Church has been more vague on constitutional issues. Even so, it has provided a coherent position on policing through insider means. As regards consultation, the Catholic Church has been consulted on each of the policy areas under study by the Executive, MLAs and legislative committees.

The Church is also effective due to the specialist or core insider status it has conferred upon it in each of the policy areas. The Church's specific resources in education, through the provision of school places, and its position within Northern Ireland society both historically and currently, contribute to this. The Church has also seen its objectives met, with CCMS maintaining its statutory status and preserving the status quo with marriage law. On constitutional issues, the Church has not seen the retention of 50:50 policing beyond 2011 (BBC NI 2011) as it desired, but has seen the stabilising of politics in Northern Ireland which it vocally supported. In this case, the evidence suggests that the Church has seen

what MacKay et al (2005: 10) refer to as ‘concrete changes in policy outcomes’ in education and has had a ‘legitimate voice’ in Northern Ireland’s constitutional and same-sex marriage debates. In light of this, the Church has experienced some obstacles in communicating its message on same-sex marriage and constitutional issues, but it is well placed to act as an effective pressure group.

#### 6.2.5.3. Belfast Islamic Centre

The Belfast Islamic Centre is less well placed to act as an effective pressure group. In light of the criterion, its limited staff capacity means it cannot engage as extensively as it might with the devolved institution. Furthermore it does not have fully coherent policy positions, it is not consulted as widely as it could be, it does not receive specialist or core insider status in any of the policy areas studied and has only seen its objective partially met in the case of education.

The BIC’s lack of staff capacity makes it difficult for it to engage in a political system known for a high level of policy consultation. The BIC has adapted from a social FBO to a socio-political FBO in order to engage in Northern Ireland’s political sphere. However, its limited staff capacity means it cannot engage widely on political issues. A lack of appropriate state sponsored faith structures which could provide access for organisations such as the BIC to engage with the Executive perpetuates the difficulty of having a political advocacy structure with limited staff capacity.

The BIC does not hold coherent policy positions in every policy area. In religious education it would like to see a greater level of ‘world religion’ taught on the curriculum, but it remains neutral in the same-sex marriage and constitutional debate. In light of this, the BIC is not consulted consistently by decision makers. It is consulted to a certain extent

on the religious education curriculum, through the NIIEF, but it does not have a position on the religious education drafting group. The BIC's lack of capacity to engage with consultation processes may well be part of the explanation as to why it is not consulted by decision makers. The focus on the 'two communities' in Northern Ireland is another possible explanation for this.

The BIC's lack of core or specialist insider status also means it is less well placed to act as an effective pressure group. While the BIC's role in the religious education curriculum is not wholly peripheral, it does not receive specialist or core insider status in any of the policy areas examined. As was noted in the previous section, this can be explained by the BIC's lack of specific resources and the difficulty it finds engaging in a political system designed to include the two major communities in Northern Ireland. Finally, the BIC has only seen its objective partially met in education with the widening of the Key Stage 3 religious education curriculum in 2007. In sum, the BIC's voluntary based political advocacy structure and lack of access to Northern Ireland's political system are barriers which make it less well placed to act as an effective pressure group.

#### 6.2.5.4 The Caleb Foundation

The Caleb Foundation is less well placed to act as an effective pressure group. Its voluntary based political advocacy structure is not appropriate for engaging with the devolved institution in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, its policy positions are not coherent, it is not widely consulted and it does not have core or specialist insider status conferred upon it. It has not seen its policy objectives met in education, and while it has with same-sex marriage, it is unlikely that it influenced the debate.

The Caleb Foundation's voluntary based political advocacy structure inhibits its effectiveness as it makes it difficult for it to engage in a political system which is known for its high level of policy consultation. Its voluntary based political advocacy structure, which reportedly only has one active volunteer working for the organisation from day to day, perpetuates this problem, making it difficult to engage politically on a consistent and frequent basis.

The Caleb Foundation has coherent policy positions in education and on same-sex marriage but not on constitutional issues. It is clear in its policy position that it is against the teaching of evolution in schools and in favour of teaching 'intelligent design' and is against same-sex marriage. However, Caleb does not have a clear position on constitutional issues. The findings suggest that this is intentional to avoid disagreements among its members. The Caleb Foundation is unevenly consulted on its policy positions. While it has advocates within the DUP who ensure the executive hear its position on the education curriculum, the evidence does not suggest that decision makers see the Caleb Foundation as an important organisation to consult on same-sex marriage or constitutional issues.

The Caleb Foundation's effectiveness is impeded due to its lack of specialist or core insider status in any of the policy areas examined. This can be explained by its lack of specific resources and its distinct theological and ideological positions. In terms of meeting its objective, same-sex marriage has not been implemented, in line with Caleb's policy position, but it is unlikely that this can be attributed to the organisation, seeing as there is no evidence to suggest that the organisation has what MacKay et al refer to as a 'legitimate voice' in the same-sex marriage debate. Further to this, there is no evidence that it has seen its objectives met in education. In sum, the Caleb Foundation does not have the political

advocacy structure or the insider access to be well placed to act as an effective pressure group in Northern Ireland's political system.

Overall, the analysis in this section has suggested that the strongly rooted FBOs are well placed to act as effective pressure groups while the weakly rooted FBOs are less well placed to act as effective pressure groups. This can be explained by the FBOs' staff capacity and the status they have conferred upon them by decision makers. The strongly rooted FBOs have the staff capacity to engage consistently and frequently in the political system, have specific resources desired by decision makers and are perceived as representative of Northern Ireland society. In contrast, the weakly rooted FBOs lack the capacity to engage consistently and frequently or have not identified specific resources decision makers desire. A lack of appropriate state sponsored faith structures which encourage engagement also inhibits their effectiveness. In the case of the BIC, Northern Ireland's 'two communities' model hinders its engagement and ultimately its effectiveness. Theological orientation also plays a minimal role in the case of the Caleb Foundation.

### **6.3. Testing the Hypotheses**

This final section assesses the hypotheses in light of the findings and the analysis of FBO political advocacy structure, strategy and effectiveness in the case of Northern Ireland. It suggests that sub-state autonomy and roots within society have a key influence on the political advocacy of FBOs. Likewise, roots in society influences FBO status, with theological orientation also playing a more minimal role.

H1: 'As the devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the higher the levels of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs'.

H1 has been partly founded. In the case of the Presbyterian Church, the Catholic Church and the BIC, capacity for engagement in the sub-state political system has increased by the appointment of staff. Caleb is the only organisation not to increase its staffing capacity.

H3: 'As the powers devolved become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the more likely it is that the region's FBOs develop a distinct strategy for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

H3 has been founded. Each FBO has focused to a greater extent at the sub-state level as the powers devolved have become more extensive and more entrenched in the region. The Presbyterian Church has appointed a member of staff to supplement the engagement it was having pre-devolution, while the Catholic Church has developed a new structure in NICCOSA for the purpose of engaging in Northern Ireland's political system. The Caleb Foundation and the BIC have increased their political engagement at the sub-state system since 1998.

H5: 'The stronger the FBO's roots within the devolved region, the more likely it is to have a staff based political advocacy structure'.

H5 has been founded. While the Presbyterian Church and the Catholic Church have a staff based political advocacy structure, the BIC, as a weakly rooted organisation also has a partial staff based political advocacy structure due to financial assistance from the Executive. However, the other weakly rooted organisation under study, the Caleb Foundation, does not have a staff based political advocacy structure.



H6: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is to utilise an insider strategy'.

H6 has not been founded in the case of Northern Ireland, where each FBO has pursued an insider strategy. Conversely, the FBOs with stronger roots have been found more likely than the weakly rooted FBOs to supplement this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy, and have used the strategy more fully, utilising their specific resources and their ability to gain media attention.

H7: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

H7 has been founded. The strongly rooted FBOs under study have had specialist or core insider status conferred upon them, but the weakly rooted FBOs have not.

H8: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is to pursue an insider strategy'.

H8 has not been founded. Theology has not been found to influence the strategy of FBOs, with more theologically moderate and less theologically moderate FBOs pursuing insider strategies.

H9: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

H9 has only been found in the minority of cases. Theology only plays a role in the status conferred upon the Caleb Foundation, with its irregular position on intelligent design

thwarting its ability to gain insider access. However, theology has not been found to influence the status conferred upon the other FBOs.

H10: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

H10 has been founded. The strongly rooted FBOs were found to be better placed to act as effective pressure group than the weakly rooted FBOs.

H11: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

H11 has only been found in the minority of cases. The Caleb Foundation's theological orientation makes it difficult for it to gain insider status in education, which contributes in turn to it being less well placed to act as an effective pressure group, but theology has not influenced the other case study's effectiveness.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the findings in relation to secondary research question 1, 2 and 3 in the cases of the FBOs selected for the case of Northern Ireland. It indicates that the FBOs at the sub-state level in Northern Ireland have increased their capacity to engage with the devolved institutions. Each FBO pursues an insider strategy with the strongly rooted FBOs supplementing this with extensive responsible outsider strategies. Strongly rooted FBOs have used their specific resources and position within society to ensure they have specialist or core insider status conferred upon them, but the weakly rooted FBO's lack specific resources, privileged position within society and staff capacity resulting in a peripheral insider status. In light of this, the strongly rooted FBOs are well placed to act as effective

pressure groups while the weakly rooted FBOs are less well placed. The next Chapter will analyse these findings along with the findings presented and analysed in Chapter 5.

# **Chapter 7: Discussion**

## **Introduction**

Chapters 5 and 6 presented and analysed the political advocacy structures, strategies and effectiveness of FBOs in Wales and Northern Ireland. The aim of this chapter is to draw out general conclusions by examining the thesis' central research question in regards to the findings presented in these cases. The chapter also draws on the literature regarding FBO engagement in Scotland. Following this, the second section assesses the hypotheses in response to both case studies. In the final section, the practical contributions of the thesis are examined. The opportunities available to FBOs at the sub-state level, appropriate strategies, the importance of identifying resources and the role of state sponsored structures are discussed.

### **7.1 The Research Questions.**

The thesis' central research question asked: 'In what ways have faith-based organisations engaged with devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?' This question was investigated using three secondary research questions grounded in the theoretical literature assessed in Chapter 3, which analysed the FBO's political advocacy structures, their strategies and whether they were well placed to act as effective pressure groups. Each of these secondary research questions are now examined in light of the findings in both Wales and Northern Ireland.

### 7.1.1. 'What type of political advocacy structures have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?'

Partly due to case study selection, the majority of the FBOs are purely territorial organisations or territorial organisations loosely affiliated to the centre. Only in the case of the Catholic Church in Wales and in Northern Ireland was this not the case. In Northern Ireland, the Irish Catholic Bishop's Conference is centralised but had conferred a high level of autonomy on the Church in Northern Ireland to engage with political matters in Northern Ireland prior to 1998 and this has continued since the establishment of the Assembly. In Wales we saw Keating's (2013) 'institutional isomorphism' as the Church devolved autonomy over education from the centre to the sub-state level in 2015 as incongruence developed between Wales and England's education systems. Each FBO had some level of democracy in its political advocacy structure apart from the Catholic Churches in Ireland and Wales which are elite led. Apart from the Caleb Foundation, each FBO increased its capacity to engage with the devolved institutions. Each of these FBOs did this by increasing its staff capacity, apart from the Muslim Council of Wales (MCW) which has developed a voluntary based political advocacy structure to engage with the devolved political institutions. However, while Northern Ireland had a greater level of sub-state autonomy than Wales, FBOs in the Northern Ireland case did not have a greater level of capacity in their political advocacy structures than FBOs in the case of Wales. The empirical research also indicates that as part of their political advocacy structures each FBO has developed a regional strategy. For instance, the MCW mobilised to engage politically in Wales. The other FBOs,

apart from the Caleb Foundation, have appointed staff so as to increase their engagement in a political system with a greater level of access than existed prior to 1998/9.

Three main factors can explain this general pattern of adaptation. The first factor is the opportunity political devolution presents to FBOs. In line with Keating's (2013: 119) reference to the way in which organisations are 'induced' to engage at the sub-state level as the region is defined by the devolved institutions, the FBOs under study have recognised an opportunity and have devolved autonomy in the case of the Catholic Church in Wales, or increased capacity accordingly in the case of the MCW, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Catholic Church in Ireland, Cytûn and the Church in Wales. Cytûn and the Church in Wales appointed staff to take advantage of the opportunities to lobby in the early years of political devolution, with organisations such as the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland by increasing their staff capacity in 2006/7. The resonance of this finding for understanding FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK is strengthened by Watts' (2007: 151, 162-163) and Keating's (2010: 94-95) findings in regards to FBO engagement in Scotland which indicate that FBOs increase their staff capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions. However, as in Wales and Northern Ireland, this appears to mainly be the prerogative of Christian FBOs.

Secondly, Keating's (2013: 123) claim that sub-state governments encourage and even sponsor pressure groups to adapt to the sub-state level is identified in Wales and Northern Ireland. The Welsh Government played a key role in the creation of the MCW, acting in Walker's (1983: 400) terms as a 'patron', by facilitating and encouraging its mobilisation. Likewise, the Northern Ireland Executive also acted as a 'patron' by providing financial assistance which paid for the Belfast Islamic Centre's (BIC) part time member of

staff. This member of staff was not specifically, or even mainly for political engagement, but the existence of the member of staff allows the BIC to take part in the political system. It is no surprise therefore that the FBOs have adapted their political advocacy structures to engage with the devolved institutions as access points have been created, opening up new opportunities for engagement.

Thirdly, the role of Identity is more limited than the other two drivers, but it nevertheless plays a part. Keating (2013: 119-120) notes that groups which have members with an 'affective attachment to the region' which lead to the groups having 'decentralist traditions and philosophy' are likely to engage at the sub-state level. An historical ideological attachment to the sub-state level was seen in the case of Cytûn. Cytûn's decision to increase its staff capacity before the Assembly was established in 1999 is likely associated with its involvement with the debate for self-government, the Council of Churches in Wales' support for devolution in 1979, and the support for devolution by a number of the nonconformist denominations represented by Cytûn.

To conclude, each FBO is a territorial organisation, apart from the Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Catholic Church in Ireland. However, the Catholic Church in Ireland conferred a high level of autonomy on the Church in Northern Ireland to engage politically prior to 1998 and this has continued since the establishment of the Assembly. The Catholic Church in England and Wales devolved autonomy over education policy to the sub-state level in Wales in 2015. Each FBO has differing levels of democracy in its political advocacy structure, apart from the Catholic Church in Ireland, the Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Caleb Foundation which are elite led. The majority of organisations have adopted staff based political advocacy structures to engage with

devolved institutions, increasing their staff capacity. However, the MCW has increased its capacity by adopting a voluntary based political advocacy structure. Only the Caleb Foundation has not increased its capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions. The opportunity political devolution presents, the opportunities created by sub-state government, and the role of identity are important factors in explaining this.

#### 7.1.2: 'What type of strategies have faith-based organisations adopted to engage with the political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?'

The findings indicate that FBOs at the sub-state level pursue an insider strategy. This strategy mainly consists of engaging with consultations, private meetings with the executive and members of the legislature, giving evidence to committees and commissions and using formal structures where they exist. The insider approach is therefore the primary and base strategy of each FBO. Each FBO pursuing an insider strategy underlines the openness of the devolved institutions, further bolstering Chambers and Thompson's (2005a) claim that political devolution has provided an opportunity for FBO engagement, with each organisation taking the opportunity to engage through insider means. This claim is further strengthened for understanding FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK in light of Steven's (2003: 161-165) assertion that FBOs in Scotland also receive substantial access to the devolved institutions. However, as discussed in the theoretical literature, access and influence are two very different things (see Maloney et al 1994: 25-27), as will be evidenced when examining the status conferred on the FBOs by the devolved institutions.

The findings also indicate that strongly rooted FBOs supplement this insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy. This outsider strategy consists mainly of utilising the media, as seen in the case of the Church in Wales with the Human Transplantation Bill and



the Presbyterian Church and the Catholic Church in Ireland with same-sex marriage. There are also examples in the findings of the Church in Wales, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland mobilising public support through speeches at public events, specifically when campaigning on constitutional issues. The Archbishop of Wales' involvement as the main figurehead of 'Cymru Yfory', and Cardinal Brady's use of sermons, homilies and prayers as rhetorical devices in favour of constitutional progress are prominent examples.

The explanation for the use of this outsider strategy concurs with Binderkrantz's findings in the theoretical literature that groups engaging in 'highly politicised policy areas' (2005: 706-708) and which want to 'place an issue on the agenda' (2005: 703) are more likely to utilise the media. The findings in this thesis suggest that strongly rooted FBOs supplement their insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy, utilising the media when FBOs require public support, or when they cannot take government or legislative members' support for granted. This was the case with the Church in Wales and the Human Transplantation Bill as well as with the Archbishop's campaign for further devolution. Further to this, the Catholic Church in Ireland and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland utilised the media in the same-sex marriage debate as they were unsure of support from MLAs and hence utilised a responsible outsider strategy to influence public debate. This finding is also reflected in Gillan's (2008: 167) study which indicates that the Catholic Church in Scotland acted as both an insider in the policy process, and utilised an outsider strategy through the media.

Strongly rooted FBOs are able to supplement their insider strategies with outsider strategies because of their status within the devolved societies. They do not rely on decision

makers for this status and hence can also pursue more critical outsider strategies. Their staff based political advocacy structures also makes this strategy more worthwhile. This is seen clearly in the case of the Church in Wales, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland. These strongly rooted FBOs can ensure they receive the headlines they require, making a responsible outsider strategy beneficial. They are FBOs which are region-wide and, in the case of the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church in Ireland, have recognisable figureheads which remain in post for lengthy periods of time and are seen to embody the denomination. These findings shows that it is possible, as Grant (2000: 135-136) has argued, to utilise a high profile media strategy in tandem with an insider strategy.

The findings in both Wales and Northern Ireland indicate that the majority of FBOs under study work in coalition with other FBOs. The findings suggest that FBOs at the sub-state level have utilised coalition formation as a strategy in salient policy areas, coinciding with Mahoney and Baumgartner's (2004) findings. Furthermore, the thesis' findings add strength to a claim in the literature which lacks consensus, that pressure groups form coalitions where there is conflict between interests (Heinz et al 1993: 358, Mahoney 2007). The findings also coincide with the work of Hula (1999) and Whitford (2003) who argue pressure groups form coalitions in order to share internal resources and reach common goals.

The majority of FBOs studied received a level of core or specialist insider status from decision makers, with others receiving peripheral insider status. In line with Maloney et al's (1994: 29) claim, this division is closely related to the specific resources possessed by FBOs

which they can exchange with decision makers for specialist or core status. Theological and religious orientation also plays a more limited role.

Strongly rooted FBOs possess a range of specific resources such as economic power, knowledge (normally technical expertise), a representative base, implementation power and compliance power' which Maloney et al (1994: 29) argue can be exchanged for specialist or core insider status. For instance, strongly rooted FBOs possess specific resources such as the provision of school places (Church in Wales, the Catholic Church in Wales and the Catholic Church in Ireland), and an historic role in education (Presbyterian Church in Ireland). These are used as resources by strongly rooted FBOs in the negotiation process with decision makers in the devolved institutions. These strongly rooted organisations are also perceived as key stakeholders with a representative base in policy areas of a moral nature, as was found in the case of the Human Transplantation Act and in the same-sex marriage debate. The FBOs can use their representative nature and historic involvement in issues such as marriage as a resource. The historical role of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Ireland also ensures their involvement in today's constitutional debates. The weakness of civil society in Wales (see Chaney 2011: 215-216), and the Church in Wales' relative strength as a 'national institution' (Harris and Startup 1994, Doe 2004) led by a reasonably recognisable figurehead, means it has resources it can offer decision makers. This was seen in the way the Archbishop of the Church in Wales was used as the figurehead of 'Cymru Yfory'. The strongly rooted FBOs' position in society and the combination of specific resources they use when negotiating with decision makers in the executive and legislature mean that they receive core and specialist insider status in return.

Weakly rooted organisations are divided between those organisations which have specific resources desired by decision makers from the devolved institutions, and those which do not. Both Cytûn and the MCW received core and specialist insider status despite their weak roots in society. This is because Cytûn allows the government to indicate that it is engaging with the faith sector, and because the MCW can provide the Muslim position to the Welsh Government. In consulting the Muslim position in this way, the Welsh Government is able to show that it is inclusive of a wide range of interests.

Furthermore, Cytûn and the MCW have offered the Assembly a degree of legitimacy by offering their support to political devolution. Providing access to groups marginalised and excluded from political power was a key part of the case for political devolution (see Chaney and Fevre 2001: 26) and was central to the project's legitimacy. As Wyn Jones and Trystan (1999: 90) noted at the start of the process:

the challenge will be to generate a sense of legitimacy for the National Assembly which is non-partisan and extends to all those who live in Wales. The success or failure of this task seems to largely depend on the ability of those involved in the devolution process to turn the rhetoric of inclusiveness that has characterised Welsh politics since the 1997 general election into reality

Cytûn's strong support for the political devolution process, expressed through its decision to appoint a member of staff to engage with the Assembly from as early as 1999 and its eagerness to act as a liaison between the Assembly and the faith sector, assists in this legitimising process, with Cytûn receiving specialist insider status in return. Likewise, the MCW's growing support for the political devolution process, and for further devolution, allows the Assembly to display the civic and open nature of the

devolution settlement. As Whittaker has noted (2015: 17), the MCW's support for primary law making powers in 2011 was 'symbolic' of Wales's political system as an 'inclusive space'. The evidence therefore suggests that weakly rooted FBOs at the sub-state level can also possess the specific resources Maloney et al (1994: 29) argue are desired by decision makers, that to some extent differ from the resources of strongly rooted FBOs. They may also be resources which strongly rooted FBOs cannot provide.

Even so, there is also the danger that weakly rooted FBOs may become what Grant (1995: 20) refers to as 'prisoners' of sub-state decision makers. Decision makers from the devolved governments and legislatures may require the resources possessed by these weakly rooted FBOs, but they are not wholly dependent on them. For instance, decision makers could identify other representative organisations. The fear of losing representative status, in this way could lead an organisation to shy away from criticising the legislature or the executive. This echoes research findings in the literature which have warned of neo-corporatist type relationships between organisations at the sub-state level and decision makers in Wales (Chaney and Fevre 2001: 37-39, Day 2006, Royles 2007: 170, Chaney 2011: 258-259, 272, Rumbul 2013, Rumbul 2016, Hill 2016, Chaney 2016). The MCW and Cytûn rely on decision makers continuing to recognise them as representatives of their faith communities. These organisations appear well placed to influence policy, but their ability to criticise the decision makers publicly may be limited.

With this in mind, the evidence suggests that ownership of specific resources is important for FBOs at the sub-state level. FBOs such as the BIC and the Caleb Foundation, which have not identified specific resources to offer to decision makers are likely to receive peripheral insider status in return. Maloney et al (1994: 20-23) are correct when they assert

that these specific resources are central to the way a FBO is perceived, with the right resources allowing for 'exchange based behaviour' between pressure groups and decision makers (Maloney et al 1994: 23). However, it is important that a FBO resists the prisoner insider status.

The findings indicate that theological and religious orientation play a limited role in determining a FBO's status. The findings suggest that the Caleb Foundation's peripheral status is due in part to its fundamentalist theological orientation, particularly in relation to the teaching of intelligent design. The BIC's theological orientation does not appear to be the cause of its peripheral status, but Northern Ireland's 'two communities' model' which frames its political system through a unionist/Protestant and nationalist/Catholic lens (see Conrad 2008: 111-138) does appear to be an obstacle for the organisation. The empirical research suggests that being representative of the Muslim community in Northern Ireland is not a resource which can be used to negotiate specialist insider status, as it is in Wales. The lack of an executive sponsored faith structure makes it difficult for the BIC to gain access to decision makers, particularly because it lacks the staff based political advocacy structure ideally required to utilise other mechanisms such as the consultation process on a consistent and frequent basis. This underlines the way in which the attitude of the devolved institutions towards faith engagement greatly influences the ability of FBOs to gain core or specialist insider status. However, this is only found in the minority of cases, and is possibly connected to Northern Ireland's unique historical, political and social context, with the role of the specific resources possessed by FBOs playing a more central role.

In sum, FBOs at the sub-state level pursue an insider strategy with strongly rooted FBOs supplementing it with an outsider strategy when the political circumstances require

them to do so. Strongly rooted FBOs can utilise their internal capacity and position within society to make this outsider strategy worthwhile. FBOs utilise coalition in salient policy areas, where there is opposition to their agenda and to share internal resources and reach common goals. The status bestowed upon FBOs by the devolved institutions is mixed. Once again, specific resources which can be exchanged with decision makers in return for specialist or core insider status are important, with theological and religious orientation playing a limited role.

### 7.1.3 'Are faith-based organisations at the sub-state level in the UK well placed to act as effective pressure groups in the decision making process?'

This section analyses the third secondary research question using the criterion of effectiveness, presented in Chapter 4. The criterion of effectiveness is measured by analysing the following key questions:

1. Has the FBO developed its political advocacy structure effectively for engaging with the devolved political institutions?
2. Has the FBO been fully consulted by decision makers?
3. Are the FBO's policy positions coherent?
4. If the FBO pursues an insider strategy, has it received peripheral, core or specialist insider status?
5. Has the FBO met its objectives?

Strongly rooted FBOs are best placed to act as effective pressure groups, but weakly rooted FBOs with core or specialist insider status and which engage in a context where formal structures stimulate FBO engagement can also be well placed to act as effective

pressure groups. The strongly rooted FBOs fulfil each of the criteria used to measure effectiveness. Firstly, as regards political advocacy structure, the strongly rooted FBOs have developed effective political advocacy structures to engage with the devolved institutions. It has been argued that a staff based political advocacy is most appropriate for engaging with the devolved institutions in Wales and Northern Ireland and the strongly rooted FBOs each have staff based political advocacy structure and have increased their staff capacity to engage with the devolved institutions. As regards policy positions, the strongly rooted FBOs also have defined policy positions in each policy area. Even in the area of constitutional issues where it could be argued the Presbyterian Church, Catholic Church in Ireland and Catholic Church in Wales took a more vague position, their positions could still be discerned. As regards consultation, each of the strongly rooted FBOs are also widely consulted by decision makers. Having a staff based political advocacy structure allows the strongly rooted FBOs to ensure they are fully consulted as they are able to make the most of the opportunities available to meet with decision makers which have become characteristic of the devolved government's operations (Cairney 2008: 631, Chaney 2011: 263-264, 268). Having staff capacity allows FBOs to be visible in Cardiff Bay and Stormont, increasing their capacity to engage with the devolved political institutions. The exception here is the Catholic Church in Wales, which has only re-organised its structures and appointed staff for the purposes of engaging with education, and only did so in 2015. As regards status, strongly rooted FBOs also receive core or specialist insider status. By identifying specific resources, the strongly rooted organisations receive core and specialist insider status, ensuring that they are well placed to influence decision makers in the devolved institution. In relation to their objectives, the strongly rooted FBOs have also seen their policy objectives met in a number of areas. This was seen in education, same-sex marriage



legislation, in amendments made to the Human Transplantation Act and on some constitutional issues. In light of this, each of the strongly rooted FBOs are well placed to act as an effective pressure group.

However, the findings also show that weakly rooted FBOs which do not have appropriate political advocacy structures, but have specialist or core insider status, are also well placed to act as effective pressure groups if appropriate state sponsored structures are present within the political system and are used by such FBOs. For instance, in regards to the first question of the criterion, the MCW has been able to overcome its lack of appropriate political advocacy structure because of the Faith Communities Forum. This ensures that the organisation is consulted and has the opportunity to discuss directly with decision makers. The forum therefore ensures it consults widely. The combination of utilising the state sponsored faith structures and having specialist or core insider status also allows these weakly rooted FBOs to see that their objectives are met. This was seen in the case of education and constitutional issues in the case of weakly rooted FBOs in Wales. However, as noted in the previous section, these types of organisations which are in the greatest danger of becoming ‘prisoner insiders’.

However, weakly rooted FBOs in Northern Ireland do not meet the criterion of effectiveness. A lack of appropriate formal faith structures in Northern Ireland means they are not able to over-come their lack of appropriate political advocacy structures. Furthermore, their lack of staff capacity means they do not have coherent policy issues and are not consulted widely. A lack of specialist or core insider status also means they have not seen their objectives met.

This section suggests that strongly rooted FBOs are best placed to act as effective pressure groups because they have the internal capacity to develop a political advocacy structure attuned to the sub-state level and because they receive core or specialist insider status from government. However, the findings indicate that weakly rooted FBOs with specialist or core insider status can overcome their lack of an appropriate political advocacy structure if the sub-state political system in which they engage has faith structures sponsored by the executive. These findings differ somewhat to the literature on Scotland. In that case, Steven (2007, 2011) recognises the Presbyterian Church of Scotland as having some level of influence in the sub-state political system, but the findings of this study go further, recognising that the majority of FBOs in Wales and Northern Ireland are well placed to act as effective pressure groups, having identified a number of areas in which FBOs have contributed to achieving policy changes or retaining the desired status quo. In this regard, the findings in Wales and Northern Ireland are similar to the findings of Gillan (2008: 170-172, 128) on FBO engagement in Scotland, which attributes FBOs with influencing policy and the public debate.

#### 7.1.4 Summary

Now that the three secondary research questions have been examined in light of the findings presented in the cases of Wales and Northern Ireland and connections drawn with the literature on Scotland, it is possible to reflect on what this tells us about how FBOs have engaged with the devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK in more general terms. Firstly, FBOs are active at the sub-state level, and in most cases engage extensively with legislation and policy areas of concern. The FBOs take their political engagement with devolved institutions seriously, increasing the capacity within their

political advocacy structures, with a number investing significant financial resources to ensure they have the capacity to engage. In general terms, the findings indicate that the FBOs have progressed from their historical role as part of the political establishment, taking on the role of pressure groups which engage alongside other interests and organisations. This can be seen in the way both strongly rooted FBOs and weakly rooted FBOs can both pursue insider access and have specialist or core insider status conferred upon them, although this is more uneven in the case of Northern Ireland. However, a certain level of privilege does appear to still exist, in the case of strongly rooted FBOs. Furthermore, there are obstacles to non-Christian FBO engagement in Northern Ireland.

In terms of the engagement itself, FBOs take advantage of the opportunities devolution has provided, engaging with consultations, giving evidence to committees and commissions, meeting with ministers and taking part in government sponsored faith structures where they exist. In this respect, FBOs are visible actors in the sub-state political systems. While this insider engagement is the base strategy of FBOs, strongly rooted FBOs utilise outsider strategies extensively and at times are critical of government decision makers. The findings also highlight the role of the faith sector, particularly in Wales, where FBOs engage across the faith spectrum. The use of coalition as a strategy, particularly with other FBOs are common. However, Northern Ireland's faith sector is still dominated by 'the churches' as it was prior to 1998. In sum, FBOs are active in their engagement, taking advantage of the opportunities available to engage with the devolved institutions and doing so as part of the wider faith sector when necessary. While a number are effective in their engagement as pressure groups, there are also obstacles which can inhibit the engagement of weakly rooted FBOs.

## **7.2 Testing the Hypotheses**

Having examined the empirical findings across the case studies it is now possible to assess each hypothesis in turn.

H1: 'As the devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the higher the levels of capacity within the political advocacy structures of FBOs'.

H1 has been founded. FBOs have increased their capacity as more power has been devolved to the sub-state level and/or as political devolution has become more entrenched in the region. The Caleb Foundation is the only FBO not to have increased its capacity.

H2: 'Regions with greater levels of sub-state autonomy will have FBOs with greater capacity in their political advocacy structures'.

H2 has not been founded. Despite the greater level of sub-state autonomy in Northern Ireland than in Wales, there is no evidence to suggest that there is a greater level of capacity amongst FBOs under study in the Northern Ireland case than there is in the case of Wales.

H3: 'As devolved powers become more extensive and entrenched in the region, the more likely it is that the region's FBOs develop a distinct strategy for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

H3 has been founded. As political devolution has become more entrenched at the sub-state level the FBOs have developed more regionally focused strategies, and/or have increased their focus at the sub-state level.

H4: 'Regions with greater levels of sub-state autonomy are more likely to have FBOs with distinct strategies for political engagement at the sub-state level'.

H4 has not been founded. FBOs in both Wales (where there is less sub-state autonomy) and in Northern Ireland (where there is a greater level of sub-state autonomy) have developed regionally focused strategies.

H5: 'The stronger the FBO's roots within the devolved region, the more likely it is to have a staff based political advocacy structure'.

H5 has been founded. The stronger rooted FBOs all have staff-based political advocacy structures, while half of the weakly rooted FBOs do not. Cytûn and the BIC are the only exceptions to this. As noted in the findings, it is likely that this is because of Cytûn's membership's attachment to the sub-state level, recognising the need to increase capacity for political engagement from an early stage. Likewise, the BIC has received funding from the Northern Ireland executive. However, this funding is not for political engagement, rather it is for social and welfare based work. On this basis, the hypothesis is founded.

H6: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is to utilise an insider strategy'.

H6 has not been founded. Strongly rooted and weakly rooted FBOs pursue an insider strategy in both Wales and Northern Ireland.

H7: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

H7 is partly founded. Each of the strongly rooted FBOs has had core or specialist insider status conferred upon them, as have half of the weakly rooted FBOs under study. However, the insider status may be more limited in the case of the weakly rooted FBOs as they are more reliant on decision makers for their core or specialist insider status.

H8: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is to pursue an insider strategy'.

H8 has not been founded. Both the theologically moderate and more theologically conservative FBOs have all pursued insider strategies.

H9: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the more likely it is that the devolved institutions confer core or specialist insider status upon the FBO'.

H9 has not been founded. The majority of conservative FBOs had core or specialist insider status conferred upon them. Even so, the findings suggest that theology can play a minor role in the status conferred on a FBO, as seen in the case of the Caleb Foundation.

H10: 'The stronger the roots of the FBO within the devolved region, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

H10 is founded. Each of the strongly rooted FBOs are well placed to act as effective pressure groups. However, some weakly rooted FBOs are also be well placed to act as effective pressure groups.

H11: 'The more theologically moderate the FBO, the better placed it is to act as an effective pressure group within the devolved political system'.

H11 has not been founded. The majority of theologically less moderate FBOs received core or specialist insider status despite their theological orientation. Even so, the findings suggest that theology can play a minor role in the status conferred on a FBO, as seen in the case of the Caleb Foundation.

Testing the hypotheses for both cases indicates how sub-state autonomy and roots within society exert a significant influence on the political advocacy structure of FBOs. Likewise, roots within society has some influence on FBO strategy and status with theology playing a limited role. Finally, roots within society has some influence on whether a FBO is well placed to act as an effective pressure group to a certain extent.

### **7.3. Practical Implications.**

Now that the research questions and hypotheses have been examined, it is possible to turn to the practical implications of the research findings for FBOs at the sub-state level. These practical implications are separated into four main sub-sections. First, the opportunities political devolution has provided for FBO engagement will be discussed in practical terms. Secondly, the strategies best suited for FBOs at the sub-state level will be covered. Thirdly, the role of the specific resources which can be exchanged with decision makers for specialist or core insider status is investigated. Finally, the importance of appropriate formal structures for faith engagement will be discussed.

#### **7.3.1 The opportunities for FBOs**

This thesis suggests that the sub-state level offers opportunities for FBO engagement. This can be seen in the way the FBOs in Wales have actively engaged with the devolved institutions and in numerous cases have seen their objectives met when engaging with

decision makers, However, in the case of Northern Ireland, the thesis suggests that political devolution has strengthened the strongly rooted FBOs' grip on access and influence, while not always offering the same level of access to organisations which had previously been unable to engage with decision makers, as seen in the case of the BIC and the Caleb Foundation. Therefore, while political devolution offers an opportunity for FBOs to engage as effective pressure groups at the sub-state level, the thesis points to a mixed picture regarding the opportunities available to weakly rooted FBOs. Along with the positive example of inclusion, there are also examples of political devolution consolidating traditional inequalities. Likewise, evidence of an inclusive political system has been accompanied by the warning that FBOs could become prisoner insider organisations.

Even so, the evidence indicates that FBOs could adapt their political advocacy structures so as to engage at the sub-state level. This thesis has found that FBOs which have increased capacity and have developed structures to engage with the devolved political institutions have identified opportunities for access and influence. The Catholic Church of England and Wales' decision to devolve power to the sub-state level in 2015 suggests that the potential to influence is worthwhile enough to persuade even a more reluctant and centralised FBO to adapt its political advocacy structure. The opportunities available for access and influence suggest that FBOs which have not devolved power to the sub-state level might contemplate doing so. It is not possible for all organisations to appoint staff for this purpose, but the findings indicate that this is an efficient way in which to engage at the sub-state level. The thesis found that the devolved institutions' emphasis on policy consultation and regular fora signifies that it is difficult to manage the policy process without full time members of staff. The only case in this research of a FBO being well placed



to act as an effective pressure group without a staff based political advocacy structure is the MCW, and it is likely that this is because its voluntary General Secretary is in reality acting as an unpaid member of staff, offering a large amount of professional experience and time to the MCW during working hours. The practical implication of this is that a staff based political advocacy structure is more appropriate for FBOs wanting to engage politically at the sub-state level.

### 7.3.2 Strategies

As regards FBO strategies, the thesis points to the value of insider strategies for FBOs at the sub-state level, and if feasible supplement these insider strategies with a responsible outsider strategy. As noted above, the devolved institutions tendency to consult and encourage participation from third sector organisations and pressure groups means there are potential access points and opportunities available for influence. However, the evidence also suggests that these insider strategies are at their best when supplemented with a responsible outsider strategy. It is not possible for all FBOs to utilise a responsible outsider strategy as this requires their having the capacity and position within society to gain media attention, but it is favourable for FBOs to pursue this strategy if it is realisable. Supplementing the insider strategy with a responsible outsider strategy, particularly through the media, allows a FBO to build upon its negotiation with decision makers by placing issues on the agenda and influencing the public narrative when the issue is particularly controversial.

### 7.3.3 Resources

This thesis has pointed to the role of resources in determining the status conferred upon FBOs. The thesis indicates that both weakly rooted FBOs and strongly rooted FBOs, can have

the specific resources needed to have a privileged status at the sub-state level, but strongly rooted FBOs are more likely to be in possession of these resources. The practical implication of these findings is that if FBOs can identify the specific resource devolved institutions require, they can attempt to take part in exchange based relationships with decision makers. This might involve more traditional resources which are policy specific, such as running schools (as seen in the case of the Church in Wales, the Catholic Church in Ireland and the Catholic Church in Wales) or a resource which ensures more general engagement, such as attempting to represent a faith community or faith communities to the devolved institutions (as seen in the case of the MCW and Cytûn).

#### 7.3.4 The role of formal structures.

The findings also point to the benefits to FBOs from devolved institutions instituting state sponsored structures, such as the Faith Communities Forum and the All Party Group on Faith. State sponsored structures offered FBOs the required access points, and aided weakly rooted FBOs in overcoming their lack of capacity, enabling their engagement with decision makers. The evidence in Wales suggests that including minority FBOs such as the MCW through state sponsored structures, leads FBOs to adopt a greater stake in the devolved process, potentially strengthening the sub-state level and widening participation in the policy process. The 'exchange based' (Maloney et al 1994: 23) relationship between FBOs and decision makers in the devolved institutions could ultimately strengthen democracy at the sub-state level.

However, there is also evidence which indicates this wider participation could at times be in danger of fabrication which could lead to FBOs becoming what Grant (1995: 20) has referred to as a 'prisoner' insider organisations. FBO participation can be strengthened

by the devolved executive so that it might show how inclusive it is, or in order to widen support for the devolved process. In light of this finding, it is important that the formal structures are not used to fabricate a particular image or brand, but instead are used to increase engagement, particularly organisations which are otherwise unlikely to be part of the decision making process. This can be achieved if decision makers in the devolved institutions work to ensure that these structures remain important spaces for negotiation rather than places for tokenistic discussion. It is also important that the devolved executives and legislatures which retain control of these structures do not allow one organisation to become the definitive representative of a faith community, or of faith, ensuring that groups beyond those residing in the structure are consulted. The evidence of the relationship between the Welsh Government and the MCW also points to the importance of ensuring that the voice of a wide theological, geographic and demographic sample from within the faith community is heard. The case of Cytûn representing the faith sector to the Welsh Government in a number of contexts signals how important it is that devolved governments do not simply tick boxes when it comes to consulting with FBOs and faith communities. However, this also requires FBOs which are members of a state sponsored faith structure to keep a critical distance from decision makers in order to avoid becoming ‘prisoner’ insider organisations. This is particularly pertinent for weakly rooted FBOs which can rely heavily on decision makers in the devolved institutions.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that in general FBOs have increased their political advocacy structures’ capacity and focused their engagement at the sub-state level, recognising the devolved political system as a productive access point for the purpose of engagement. FBOs

have also pursued insider strategies, with stronger FBOs supplementing this with an outsider strategy when necessary. The role of specific resources which can be exchanged with decision makers in return for privileged insider status was noted as a key factor in the status conferred upon FBOs by decision makers. In determining effectiveness, the political advocacy structure utilised by the FBOs as well as the role of specific resources which determine the status conferred upon FBOs were noted as key factors. Likewise, specific resources, along with the ability to utilise formal structures created by sub-state executives and legislatures, explain how some weakly rooted FBOs can be well placed to act as effective pressure groups. In light of this, the chapter has presented a range of practical implications, including the importance of a staff based political advocacy structure, the advantages of the insider strategy supplemented with a responsible outsider strategy and the role of identifying specific resources and state sponsored faith structures. Now that the research findings and their practical implications for FBOs at the sub-state level have been investigated, the final chapter will examine the thesis' contribution to the theoretical literature and wider questions surrounding religion and politics and the 'de-privatisation' of religion in 21<sup>st</sup> century western liberal democracies

## **Chapter 8: The Conclusion**

The previous chapter analysed the political engagement of faith-based organisations (FBO) at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland in comparative perspective, and examined the conclusions in practical terms for both FBOs and the devolved institutions. The purpose of this conclusion is to go a step further and to assess the contribution this thesis offers to the wider academic literature. The thesis' contribution to four bodies of literature will be discussed in turn. Firstly, the thesis' contribution to the literature regarding faith communities and faith-based organisations is examined. Secondly the way in which the thesis understands the representative and socio-political FBO as a pressure group and how this understanding can contribute to how we study FBOs in a number of different political arenas is discussed. Thirdly, the thesis' contribution to pressure group theory is examined. The thesis provides an analysis of how FBOs adapted structurally to engage with the devolved institutions, proposes amendments to Maloney et al's (1994) insider/outsider distinction and presents a developed criterion for measuring effectiveness. Finally, the way in which this study's findings address the broader literature on the privatisation and de-privatisation of religion is examined. It is argued that the thesis contributes to the widening empirical evidence that the role of religion and the engagement of FBOs is prevalent and growing in 21<sup>st</sup> century Western democracies, but also indicates that some FBOs do face obstacles to their engagement. The chapter concludes by looking to possible future research areas, and to the possibility of developing further the conclusions of this thesis.

## **8.1 Thesis Summary**

This project has sought to explore how FBOs have engaged with the devolved institutions at the sub-state level in the UK. This aim derives from the fact that scholarly literature on FBO engagement at the national and supra-national level has increased in recent times. However, little academic attention has been given to FBO engagement at the sub-state level. Furthermore, the notion that religion and faith traditionally played an important role in the politics of the sub-states that make up the UK, and Chambers and Thompson (2005a) identifying political devolution as an opportunity for FBO engagement in Wales, strengthened the importance of the argument for its study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK. In light of this, the study has examined this central research question:

‘In what ways have faith-based organisations engaged with devolved political institutions at the sub-state level in the UK?’

Chapter 2 sought to address this research question by way of assessing the literature on FBO engagement at the sub-state level in the UK, arguing that the extant literature provides a number of important insights, but a large proportion of the literature does not provide in-depth analysis of FBO engagement, and does not utilise theoretical frames. The existing, yet limited, in-depth studies of FBO engagement at the sub-state level post devolution focus solely on Scotland, with Wales and Northern Ireland understudied. The studies did not compare both representative and socio-political FBOs and focus on Christian FBOs, thus leaving non-Christian FBOs understudied. Consequently, the argument was advanced for a theoretically grounded comparative study of FBO engagement at the sub-state level including both representative, socio-political, Christian and non-Christian FBOs.

The argument advanced in chapter 3 was that representative and socio-political FBOs can be understood as pressure groups and that pressure group theory can be used to understand how FBOs engage in the devolved political systems. The thesis' theoretical framework was developed utilising Keating's (2013) theory of rescaling interest representation, Maloney et al's (1994) development of Grant's (1978) insider/outsider distinction and through employing an adapted version of Steven's (2003) measurement of effectiveness. Chapter 4 established the research design, the case studies and outlined hypotheses based on the dependent and independent variables, and the thesis' methodology.

Chapters 5 and 6 presented the research findings from Wales and Northern Ireland. Through the pressure group theory prism, these chapters identified how FBOs have engaged with the political system in Wales and Northern Ireland. Chapter 7 then compared the research findings from chapters 5 and 6. It concluded that, apart from the Caleb Foundation each has increased its capacity to engage with the devolved institutions. It was argued that FBOs utilise an insider strategy, with strongly rooted FBOs supplementing this with a responsible outsider strategy when necessary. The specific resources FBOs possess influences the status conferred upon it by decision makers. These specific resources are mainly the possession of strongly rooted FBOs, but there are examples of weakly rooted FBOs exchanging resources for core or specialist insider status. Strongly rooted FBOs are most likely to be well placed to act as effective pressure groups due to their staff based political advocacy structure and possession of resources they can exchange for core or specialist insider status. However, weakly rooted FBOs without a staff based political advocacy structure can still be well placed to act as an effective pressure group if it can

identify resources desired by decision makers and if state sponsored faith structures exist within the political system to enable engagement. The variable 'theological orientation' has only a limited role, and the findings points to the variable 'roots in society' as the more significant determinant of FBO strategy and effectiveness. In light of these findings, it is now possible to examine the contributions this thesis and its findings make to the wider literature.

## **8.2 Defining the Faith-Based Organisation**

This thesis argues for the 'faith-based organisation' to be understood within its wider context of the faith community. By bringing Adam Dinham's work (2009, 2010) on faith communities together with Clarke and Jennings' (2008: 6) definition of the FBO, this thesis has gone some way to outline the relationship between the faith community and the FBO. Connecting the two concepts together, and understanding their relationship with one another, can contribute to our study of faith-based political engagement across the political arenas. For instance, the empirical findings of this thesis showed the connection between the FBOs and the communities they represent, with some FBOs using their faith communities as a resource to be exchanged for specialist or core insider status. This points to the importance of understanding the FBO within its wider context of the faith community.

## **8.3 The FBO as a Pressure Group**

By conceptualising the FBO as a pressure group, this thesis draws on both the literature regarding FBOs and the literature regarding pressure groups. The thesis has understood the FBO as a pressure group by bringing Clarke's definition of the representative and socio-



political FBO together with Grant's (2000:14) definition of the pressure group, demonstrating the overlapping characteristics which they share. Whilst Steven (2003: 5-20, 2007: 98-101) and Grant (2000: 16) have previously conceptualised the Church of Scotland and the Church of England as pressure groups, they only studied individual 'representative FBOs'. This thesis put forward a comprehensive explanation for why both the representative FBO and the socio-political FBO should be understood as pressure groups. Understanding the FBO in this way signals that FBOs should not be analysed any differently to other pressure groups which engage in the political sphere, instead it is possible to use pressure group theory in order to understand their political advocacy structures, strategies and effectiveness.

Conceptualising the FBO in this way sets this thesis apart from many other works which examine faith actors as pressure groups. For instance, scholars such as Thompson (1997), Leustean (2011), Bollmann (2013) and Hunt (2003, 2011, 2014) refer to religious organisations as pressure groups or lobbyists, but they do not conceptualise the FBO as a pressure group. Warner (2000: 17-39) offers a conceptual explanation for understanding the Catholic Church as a pressure group, but she only does so in relation to the Church's relationship with political parties. As suggested in this thesis, the relationship between FBOs and political parties is important, but this thesis also outlined that FBOs engagement extends to the executive, legislature, committees and commissions and attempt to influence public opinion too.

Understanding the FBO as a pressure group in this way provides a framework for studying FBOs as political actors which seek to gain access to the political system, lobby decision makers and influence policy. The thesis consequently makes a contribution to the

small body of literature which studies religious actors in Europe as pressure groups, while pushing the boundaries further by conceptualising a range of different FBOs as pressure groups.

## **8.4 Pressure Group Theory**

This thesis has contributed to three main strands of pressure group theory. They are the literature on the rescaling of interest representation, the insider/outsider distinction and finally, the criterion of effectiveness.

### **8.4.1 The rescaling of interest representation**

Building on Keating's (2013: 117-123) work concerning the rescaling of interest representation at the sub-state level, this thesis contributes to an analysis of how FBOs have adapted structurally to engage with the devolved political institutions. Chambers and Thompson (2005a: 38-39) offered some tentative remarks regarding how some Christian denominations in Wales had begun to focus their attention at the sub-state level prior to 2005, but this thesis systematically studies how FBOs have adapted structurally and increased capacity to engage at the sub-state level. This thesis has offered an explanation for how FBOs adapt as power is devolved from the centre to the region and the factors which drive this adaptation. This is missing from other studies of FBOs at the sub-state level (Steven 2003, 2007, Gillan 2008). This thesis provides insights into how FBOs have adapted to engage with the devolved institutions at the sub-state level in Wales and Northern Ireland and can contribute to the wider body of literature on the rescaling of interest representation (Keating et al 2009, Keating 2013, Keating and Wilson 2014, Cairney 2007).

#### 8.4.2 The Insider/Outsider Distinction

Maloney et al's (1994: 30) adaptation of Grant's (1978) insider/outsider distinction has proved useful for the study of both the strategies pursued and status received by FBOs at the sub-state level. Using the distinction indicated how FBOs utilise a range of strategies at different times, combining both an insider and responsible outsider strategy so as to increase pressure on decision makers. The distinction also offers an insight into how the FBO is perceived by government, presenting a view of the policy process from both the organisations and decision makers, providing richer findings.

However, this thesis has indicated that Grant's (1995: 20) 'prisoner insider' status, whereby some organisations might be too reliant on decision makers for their privileged insider status, which is not included in Maloney et al's (1994: 30) distinction, is useful for understanding the relationship between FBOs and decision makers. Including the prisoner insider status along with peripheral, core and specialist insider status in future studies of pressure groups would offer a more nuanced explanation of how some organisations might be influential, but face the risk of having their influence limited by being too close to decision makers.

#### 8.4.3 Measuring Effectiveness

Another important contribution to pressure group theory in this thesis is the development of a measure of FBO effectiveness. The measurement is built upon Steven's (2003: 66) measurement of effectiveness, which is informed by the work of Grant (2000: 195-210) and Whitely and Winyard (1987: 125-131). By incorporating Maloney et al's (1994: 30) distinction, this thesis has measured effectiveness by not only looking at the strategy of the FBO, as was the case in Steven's (2003) measurement, but by examining the status the FBO

receives from decision makers. This offers a fuller picture of FBO effectiveness by analysing it from both the angle of the FBO and the decision maker. Unlike Steven (2003), this thesis' measurement of effectiveness also questions whether the FBO has an appropriate political advocacy structure, recognising that an organisation which pursues a promising strategy, and is well received by decision makers, might not be able to make the most of this advantageous position without an appropriate political advocacy structure. Utilising MacKay's continuum of influence to investigate whether an FBO achieves its policy outcomes further strengthens the criterion of effectiveness. The development of Steven's (2003: 66) measurement by including a question regarding political advocacy structure and the status conferred upon FBOs by decision makers, allows this thesis to offer a more nuanced view of effectiveness, taking a greater number of factors into account. The expectation is that this measurement can contribute to pressure group theory, further aiding the study of pressure group engagement in a variety of political arenas in the future.

## **8.5 The privatisation of religion and the de-privatisation of religion.**

The final body of literature to which this thesis contributes is the debate in the sociology of religion regarding the privatisation of religion and the de-privatisation of religion. It was noted in chapter one that religion's retreat into the private sphere has been the driving force behind much of the scholarly understanding in the field, but that this retreat is not inevitable. Scholars such as Casanova (1994: 212-215) have argued that the differentiation of society has led to the privatisation of religion, but this is not an inevitable determinant of modernisation. Instead, Casanova (1994: 215) argues it is an option, a possibility among others. In light of this, he argues that religion could (and has) re-entered the public sphere, underlining this through a number of case studies. Utilising this thesis, Chambers and

Thompson (2005a: 44) have argued that political devolution in Wales created the necessary conditions for the FBOs to increase their engagement in the public sphere, in defiance of the acute secularisation and privatisation of religion in the region. The findings of this thesis have confirmed Chambers and Thompsons' (2005a) conclusions, while noting that the sub-state political system in Northern Ireland has created more uneven engagement. The thesis has also tackled the question of whether this engagement in the public sphere has been effective, concluding that the majority of FBOs have managed to engage with the devolved institutions as organisations well placed to act as effective pressure groups. However, others are less well placed due to a combination of a lack of staff capacity, specific resources and the opportunity to engage with state sponsored faith structures. In light of these findings, this thesis contributes to the widening empirical evidence that the role of religion and the engagement of FBOs is prevalent and growing in 21<sup>st</sup> century Western democracies, but notes that some FBOs face obstacles to their engagement. These organisations are not as powerful as they once may have been, but they are showing little sign of fading away.

## **8.6 Future Research**

On the basis of its findings, this thesis points to further areas of research. It would be expedient to expand this research outside of the UK context, studying the sub-state level across European cases. The study of FBOs at the sub-state level can be extended to the European level in a similar fashion to how Keating (2013, 2014) extended Keating et al's (2009) study of pressure groups at the sub-state level in the UK, to the sub-state level across Western Europe in a number of cases. This would allow future research to examine regions in Western Europe which have established Churches as well as regions where the Catholic Church has historically been close to the state, offering different political and religious

contexts to that which has been studied in this thesis. A study such as this would offer further insights into the role of FBO engagement as pressure groups, and offer insights into wider questions regarding religion and politics in Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Building on the work of scholars such as Steven (2010), Leustean (2011), Turner (2013) and Bollmann (2013) who study FBO engagement in the European Union, this research could be extended to a 'multi-level' study of how FBOs engage between the sub-state, national and supranational level.

In sum, this thesis has shown that FBOs have been keen to engage politically at the sub-state level, with FBOs increasing their capacity and developing strategies for the purpose of engaging with the devolved institutions. Roots within society play some role in the strategy pursued and status conferred upon FBOs by decision makers, with theology playing a very limited role. Specific resources which can be exchanged for core or specialist insider status play an important part, with executive sponsored faith structures also aiding weakly rooted FBOs in their engagement. However, with some FBOs in Northern Ireland failing to identify resources, and with state sponsored faith structures lacking, access and status is uneven. Even so, while FBOs are not as powerful as they once may have been, they are visible, active and in many cases well placed to act as effective pressure groups in the UK's sub-state political systems.

## **Referenced Interviews**

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2. Interview with senior respondents, Cytûn (January 8<sup>th</sup> 2015).
3. Interview with key informant, Muslim community in Wales (January 12<sup>th</sup> 2015).
4. Interview with former staff member, Council of Churches for Wales and Cytûn (January 29<sup>th</sup> 2015).
5. Interview with former politician involved in the 'Yes for Wales' campaign (February 17<sup>th</sup> 2015).
6. Interview with senior respondent, Muslim Council of Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).
7. Interview with senior respondent, Church in Wales (February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).
8. Interview with senior respondent, Catholic Education Service (CES) (11<sup>th</sup> February 2015).
9. Interview with senior respondent, Church in Wales (19th February 2015 ).
10. Interview with senior respondent, Catholic Church in Wales (26<sup>th</sup> February 2015).
11. Interview with Senior respondents, Church in Wales (3 March 2015)
12. Interview with senior respondents, Cytûn's member denomination (January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015)
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14. Interview with senior respondent, Presbyterian Church in Ireland (June 29<sup>nd</sup> 2015)
15. Interview with senior respondents, Belfast Islamic Centre (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015).
16. Interview with senior respondent, Caleb Foundation (July 2015).
17. Interview with senior representative, Catholic Church in Ireland (July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015).
18. Interview with key respondent, Muslim community in Northern Ireland (July 9<sup>th</sup> 2015).
19. Interview with a former minister of the Northern Ireland Executive (July 13<sup>th</sup> 2015).

20. Interview with senior respondent from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).
21. Interview with key informant, Muslim community in Northern Ireland (July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015).
22. Interview with Alliance Party MLA (August 14<sup>th</sup> 2015).
23. Interview with Ulster Unionist Party MLA (August 17<sup>th</sup> 2015).
24. Interview with senior representative, Presbyterian Church in Ireland (August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015).

## **Referenced Correspondence**

1. Correspondence with former Welsh Government minister (June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015).
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